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FAMILIAR ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCOTTISH LIFE

BY THE REV. DR ROGERS.

"Woman, I'm no a man I'm a Magistrate".

LONDON
HOULSTON AND WRIGHT
65, PATERNOSTER ROW

FAMILIAR ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

SCOTTISH LIFE

EMBODYING

NEARLY FIVE HUNDRED ANECDOTES

AND

STORIES CHIEFLY ORIGINAL

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BY THE

REV. CHARLES ROGER
LL.D., F.S.A., SCOT.

THE EIGHTH THOUSAND

LONDON
HOULSTON AND WRIGHT
65 PATERNOSTER ROW
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PREFACE.

In he spring of 1861, I published the first edition of this little work. The volume embraced some of my own experiences, with a number of anecdotes I had jotted down during a period of twenty years. Though hastily edited, the effort was so kindly commended by the Press, that I was encouraged to persevere in my self-imposed task of illustrating the habits and manners of my countrymen. In the autumn of 1861, I ventured to transmit a schedule of queries to the whole of the Parochial Clergy, and the numerous replies of a most interesting kind with which I was favoured, satisfied me that many more curious particulars might be obtained. To the Schoolmasters of the non-responding parishes I next addressed a circular letter, and from this most obliging body I obtained important additions to my anecdotal and traditional stores. My desire to collect curious lore being now widely known,

correspondents started up in various districts of the country. From a gentleman, a native of Scotland, resident in India, I received a budget of unrecorded anecdote, which entitles him to the expression of my gratitude. But of all my correspondents, I must assign the most honoured place to my valued friend, Dr Hugh Barclay, Sheriff-Substitute of Perthshire, whose interesting contributions I have had occasion frequently to acknowledge in these pages.

During a tour which I have lately completed through the whole of the United Kingdom, I have been able to glean many curious Scottish stories hitherto unpublished. About two hundred anecdotes have been added to the work since its original appearance.

I present the result of my labours to my much-loved "brither Scots," in the hope that in these pages they may find something to amuse, or to instruct, or to recall pleasing associations.

CHARLES ROGERS.

2 Heath Terrace,
Lewisham, Greenwich,
April 1866.

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FAMILIAR ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

SCOTTISH LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE PULPIT AND THE PARISH.

In the Established Church of Scotland, lay patrons possess the right of nominating to the parochial cures. This remnant of feudalism has always been looked upon as a grievous incubus by the more earnest section of the Church; and though the system has not been without its defenders, it has alienated from the Establishment about two-thirds of the Scottish people. A Dumfries-shire clergyman of the past century, who had obtained his parish from the patron, apart from the wishes of his future hearers, was engaged in a diet of visitation. In those days the parochial clergyman was expected to examine both old and young respecting their Scriptural knowledge. "Who made Paul a preacher?" inquired the minister of a shrewd old Presbyterian, who had little relish for his pastoral services. "It wasna the Duke o' Queensberry, I guess," was the cutting reply.—A minister in Forfarshire had been

presented to his living by a nobleman who was the principal *heritor* or landowner in his parish. The minister some time after applied to his heritors for repairs on his manse, for which they were legally bound. The noble patron resented the demand on his finances by addressing the incumbent in the following strain of pompous denunciation and menace:—"Sir, I have raised thee, and I will raze thee."—The Rev. James Wright, minister of Logie, Stirlingshire, had obtained his living through the influence of his relative the laird of Loss, an estate in the parish. The relatives afterwards quarrelled, probably owing to the keen oversight of the rights of office exercised by the incumbent. As an heritor, the laird of Loss paid stipend; and in the hope of affronting the minister, he despatched to the manse Johnnie Armstrong, the executioner of Stirling, to settle the amount due. Johnnie was particularly enjoined to procure a discharge; it was readily granted, and in the following terms:—"Received from John Wright, Esq. of Loss, &c., by the hands of his *doer*,* the hangman of Stirling!"

Till a very recent period, the reception of a presentation from the patron to a vacant parish was tantamount to the absolute possession of the cure. The people had, indeed, the right of objecting, but the privilege was so encumbered that opposition to a presentee was generally hopeless. In 1767, the Rev. Mr Thomson, minister of Gargunnock, was presented to the parish of St Ninians. The parishioners refused to subscribe a call, and the Presbytery accordingly declined to proceed with the induction. After eight years' contention before the Church courts, the Presbytery of Stirling were at length peremptorily ordered by the General Assembly to expedite the settlement.

* Agent or bailiff.

Each member of the court declined to preside on the occasion; but the duty was ultimately undertaken by Mr Finlay, minister of Dollar. The presbytery and parishioners being assembled in the parish church on the day of the settlement, Mr Finlay, after discharging the preliminary duties in the usual manner, inducted Mr Thomson with these words:—"I appoint you, Mr Thomson, stipend-lifter of this parish."

In the other sections of the Presbyterian Church there are often differences attendant on the appointment of ministers, as well as in the Establishment.

When it was proposed by the Secession congregation at Haddington to give *a call* to the afterwards celebrated Mr John Brown, one of the adherents of the church expressed his decided opposition. Subsequent to his ordination, Mr Brown waited on the solitary dissentient, who was menacing to leave the meeting-house. "Why do you think of leaving us?" mildly inquired Mr Brown. "Because," said the sturdy oppositionist, "I don't think you a good preacher." "That is quite my own opinion," replied the minister; "but the great majority of the congregation think the reverse, and it would not do for you and me to set up our opinions against theirs. I have given in, you see, and I would suggest you might just do so too." "Weel, weel," said the grumbler, quite reconciled by Mr Brown's frank confession, "I think I'll just follow your example, sir." All differences were ended.

Objections to presentees occasionally proceed from "causeless prejudices." In a majority of the rural parishes, the use of a MS. in the pulpit would, till a recent period, have been fatal to the cordial acceptability of any presentee. "He's a graund preacher!" whispered an old spinster to her sister, on hearing a young minister for the first time. "Whist, Bell,"

was the reply; "he 's readin'." "Readin' is he!" said the eulogist, changing her tone; "filthy fallow! we 'll gang hame, Jenny, and read our book." In 1762, the celebrated Dr Thomas Blacklock was presented to the church-living of Kirkcudbright. The Doctor laboured under the loss of eyesight. When he was preaching one of his trial discourses as presentee, an old woman who sat on the pulpit stairs inquired of a neighbour whether he was a reader. "He canna be a reader, for he 's blind," responded the neighbour. "I'm glad to hear 't," rejoined the old wife; "I wish they were a' blin'!"—A clergyman in Forfarshire, who was conducting public worship in a tent or booth, had a portion of his notes carried off by the wind. Not perceiving the circumstance, he had announced that he would now proceed to the third head or division of his discourse. Having forgotten the precise title of the division, he hastily turned over his notes, remarking two or three times, "Thirdly, my friends; I say, thirdly;" on which an old woman sitting by ejaculated, "*Thirdly*, sir, is awa wi' the wund; yonder 's it ower the kirkyard wa'."—The late Rev. Dr Thos. Gillespie was, prior to his appointment to a professorship, parish minister of Cults. He was in the habit of relating, that at the commencement of his ministry he carefully wrote out every word of his discourses. On one occasion, owing to absence from home, he had been unable to make his usual preparations. He was thus necessitated, on the following Sabbath, to improvise a discourse. "It was," said the Doctor, "the only sermon I was ever asked to publish."

"Causeless prejudices" against the clergy were in former times not confined to a repugnance on the part of the people to the use of notes in the public minis-

trations. By some narrow-minded but well-meaning persons, the minister was denied all the pleasures and amusements of social life. There is a well-known story of the gardener of Inverkeithing and the Rev. Ralph Erskine of Dunfermline. The gardener desired to have the ordinance of baptism administered to his child; but having differed with his parish minister, whom he accused of worldliness, he resolved to solicit the services of the pastor of an adjoining parish. Reaching that clergyman's manse, accompanied by his wife carrying the baby, he inquired whether the minister was at home. He was informed by the maid-servant that the minister was a-fishing, but that he would certainly return very soon. "He may come hame when he likes," said the gardener, "but nae fishin' minister shall bapteeze my bairn!" The party proceeded to another manse, but the incumbent was, according to the story, "oot shootin'." "Nae shootin' minister" would suit the enraged gardener, who now proposed that his spouse should accompany him to "gude Maister Ralph Erskine at Dunfermline, wha," he added, "I 'se warrant, will be better employed than in fishin' or shootin'." As the wanderers approached Mr Erskine's residence, they heard the notes of a violin, and the distressed gardener at once concluded that the reverend gentleman was from home. "The minister's no at hame, I see," said he, addressing Mr Erskine's servant. "The minister is at hame," said the girl, "and dinna ye hear?—he 's takin' a tune till himsel on the fiddle; he taks a tune ilka e'enin'." The gardener was almost frantic with disappointment and vexation. "Could I hae believed it," exclaimed he, "that Maister Ralph Erskine wad play on the fiddle!" He was somewhat relieved by learning that Mr Erskine did not use the ordinary instrument, but

the violoncello—"the big gaucy fiddle!" "But," he added, "I maun admit that oor ain minister, though wrang in some things, is better than the lave o' them; for he neither fishes, nor shoots, nor plays the fiddle."

The translation of a minister to another parish has occasioned some "hard hits" at the expense of the migrating clergyman. There is the story of a minister in Fifeshire, who, on his exclaiming to an aged female that he had got a call, met with the reply, "It 'll no be to Cults or Auchtertool." The two parishes indicated were supposed to possess the smallest stipends in the county.

The late Rev. Dr John Muir of Glasgow was for some years minister of the beautiful little parish of Lecropt in Perthshire. He had returned to that parish to assist his successor on one of the days of worship at the communion season. In his morning walk he met with a shrewd old woman with whom he had been in the habit of conversing familiarly. "What a lovely view, Kate," said the Doctor, pointing to the Carse of Stirling; "I can fancy this place is just like Paradise!" "O ay, sir," responded Kate; "but wae 's me, for I aye fancy you 're like Adam; ye war in Paradise, and ye wouldna bide!"

Sixty or eighty years ago, ecclesiastical prelections frequently partook of a homely character. Church incidents occurred in those days which, then not much accounted of, would now be deemed utterly extravagant. A minister in the vicinity of Perth, after expressing the prayers of his congregation for "the noble family who has lately come to reside amongst us," quaintly added to the petition—"Lest there should be any mistake, it is the Earl of Kinnoul I mean."—One of the most eccentric clergymen of the latter part of the last century was the Rev. Peter

Glas, minister of Crail. His pulpit language was broad Scotch, and his expressions, even in devotion, were particularly simple. Many of his parishioners being fishermen, he usually prayed specially for their welfare. One day, using the expressions, "May the boats be filled wi' herrin' up to the very tow-holes," (spaces for the oars,) a fisherman lustily called out, "Na, no that far, sir, or we wad a' be sunk."

The familiarity of Mr Glas in the pulpit occasionally invited a colloquy on the part of some members of his flock. Describing in a discourse the sufferings endured by the Christians during the persecution under Nero, Mr Glas proceeded:—"The persecutors tore the flesh from the bones of their living victims with red-hot, red-hot, red-hot"—"pinchers may be, sir," exclaimed James Kingo, convener of the trades, who sat in the Weavers' Gallery, close by the pulpit. "Thank you, Convener," said the minister, "you're quite right—red-hot pinchers." A farmer in the parish had been in the habit of sleeping in church, much to Mr Glas's annoyance. Mr Glas reproved him privately, and the farmer excused himself by stating that on account of his arduous labours during the week, he could not help being overcome with drowsiness in church. He expressed a hope that the minister would extend to him a little indulgence, adding that he would drive two cart-loads of coals to the manse. Mr Glas listened to the explanation and promise. Next Sabbath, the farmer not only slept, but gave very audible demonstration of the fact. "Wauken David Cowan," said the minister. On a nudge from his neighbour, administered according to the clerical request, David awakened suddenly, and after looking round, put the minister in mind of the privilege he understood to be conferred for "the twa

carts." "David," said the minister, "I micht hae winked at the sleepin', but I canna permit you to snore."

A contemporary of Mr Glas, and a clergyman in the same county, was the Rev. Robert Shirra, minister of the Burgher church at Kirkcaldy, a man of most eccentric ways, but withal remarkable for the ability and unction of his pulpit ministrations. The following anecdote of Mr Shirra I present in the precise form in which it has reached me :—At Kinghorn, as at other ferries about that period, it was the practice of the boatmen, whose turn it was to sail, to call the loungers and passengers from their potations and lurking places by bawling from end to end of the town, "The boat, aho! to Leith, aho!" Mr Shirra was preaching in the Burgher tent at Kinghorn on a fast-day; and observing lang Tam Gallawa, with some boatmen and passengers, in the bustle of passing down to Pettycur, he stopped short in his discourse, and addressed them with an energy peculiar to himself, "Boatmen, aho!" The boatmen and attendants stopped. "Boatmen, you cry 'The boat, aho! to Leith, aho!' We cry, Sal-va-ti-on, aho! to heaven, aho! You sail aneath Skipper Gallawa there; we sail aneath Christ;—we hae Christ for oor skipper, the Holy Spirit for oor pilot, and God himsel at the helm! Your boat, let me tell ye, is but a bit fir deal frae Norawa; the keel o' oor boat was laid in Bethlehem, built in Judea, rigged in Jerusalem, launched on Mount Calvary; we hae the Cross o' Christ for a helm, a cedar o' Lebanon for a mast, an' the redemption o' mankind for a freight. Your voyage, under your earthly skipper, short as it is, may end in shipwreck and disaster; but oor voyage, lang as it may be, wi' Christ for oor skipper, will end in everlasting

joy and glory unspeakable! Slip awa noo, for time an' tide will nae man bide; but mind what I 've said t' ye—diuna sweer nor tak the holy name o' God in vain, as ye were wont to do, an' I 'll pray for ye."

A city minister, when preaching on the occasion of churching a new magistracy, without any intention to insult, unfortunately took as his text, "The wicked walk on every side, *when the vilest men are exalted.*"

The following appeared lately in a provincial newspaper :—"The Rev. Thomas Weston was an eccentric minister at the rise of Congregationalism in Scotland, and was for some years pastor of the West Port Independent meeting-house in Dundee. After ceasing to be minister of that congregation, he was in the habit of itinerating through Scotland, and preaching in the halls, more especially those belonging to Mason Lodges, supporting himself by collections at the door. He frequently repaired to the town where he formerly ministered. He had often crowded audiences, attracted by the quaint and humorous illustrations which he delighted to indulge in. On one occasion, when preaching in a small hall in Dundee, the Rev. Dr Peters, one of the ministers of the Established Church, was desirous of hearing him, but at the same time wished to do so unobserved, and attempted to screen himself from the notice of the audience by standing behind the door. The precaution, however, was unavailing. The eye of the preacher detected his presence; and the congregation were apprised of the fact by a supplication on behalf of 'Thy reverend servant behind the door.'"

The Rev. James Oliphant, of Dumbarton, adopted a peculiar but sufficiently ingenious method of proving the wicked dispositions of the devil. He remarked that every aspect of his name was bad. "From the

word *devil*, which in itself means an *accuser* or *enemy*," said Mr Oliphant, "take the *d*, and you have the word *evil;* remove the *e*, and the remainder is *vil;* take away the *v* and it is *ill;* and the sound of the last letter reminds you of the name of the pit."

A clergyman in the west country enjoyed a reputation for his gift or "power o' prayer." The following is a specimen; and if the quaintness of the language is overlooked, the sentiment is striking and devotional: —"O Lord, Thou is like a moose in a dry-stane dyke —aye keekin' oot at us frae holes an' crannies, an' we canna see Thee."

The Rev. John Dickson, who flourished towards the end of the seventeenth century, is said to have used the following expressions in public prayer:—"Dibble the kail seed of grace in our hearts, and if we grow not up gude kail mak us gude sprouts at least."

The utterance in the pulpit of quaint or rugged phrases or figures of thought, couched in incorrect language, never fails to excite feelings of the ludicrous. An old clergyman in Forfarshire, in describing the state of the blessed, exclaimed—as an hyperbole—"Yes, *breethren*, hevin is better than a' the Carse o' Gowrie." This description was doubtless more intelligible to the audience than the flowery oratory of a modern probationer, who, in a discourse on heaven, remarked, "that it was perfumed with the melody of the nightingale."

An old minister in the west country, having occasion to allude in his discourse to the discoveries of modern astronomy, said that Sir Isaac Newton was "as weel acquainted wi' the stars as if he had been born and brocht up amang them." The late Rev. Robert Story of Roseneath used to relate an anecdote of an old field preacher, who, on referring to some doctrinal error which was then agitating the churches, informed his

hearers that they "micht as weel think to feed their bodies on whin stanes and shinders as their souls on thae metapheesical subtleties." But the most extraordinary piece of pulpit declamation which has probably ever been recorded, is the following:—An eccentric divine in the north of Scotland, discoursing on a class of persons who were obnoxious to him, concluded with this singular peroration: "Ma freens, it is as impossible for a *moderate* to enter the kingdom o' hevin, as for a coo to climb up a tree wi' her tail foremost and harry a craw's nest; or for a soo to sit on the tap o' a thistle and sing like a mavis." The same reverend gentleman, in the course of a sermon on the depravity of human nature, spoke thus—"The human heart is just like a rig o' potawtoes, that when it's weedit at the a'e end, the ither end begins to grow again."

A reverend probationer of the Established Church, who, in conducting the public devotions, extended at great length on the Divine attributes, used the following terms:—"We would remark further, that Thou art omnipotent; by this, we mean that Thou art everywhere present." The Rev. P. S., another probationer, in discoursing from the text "Jesus wept," sententiously remarked, "Commentators are all agreed that this is the shortest verse in the Bible."

The Rev. John Ross, minister of Blairgowrie, indulged his propensity for verse-making in his announcements from the pulpit as to his diets of parochial visitation. The following has been preserved:—

> "The Milton, the Hilton, Rochabie, and Tammamoon,
> Will a' be examined on Thursday afternoon."

The pulpit has often been used to warn the froward and awaken the indifferent. A minister in Arran discoursing of the carelessness of his flock, proceeded as

follows—"Brethren, when you leave the church just look down at the Duke's* swans; they're very bonny swans, and they'll be sooming about, an' ayo dooking doon their heads and laving theirsels wi' the clear water till they're a'drookit; then you'll see them sooming to the shore, and they'll gie their wings a bit flap and they're quite dry again. Now, my friends, you come here every Sabbath, and I lave you a ower wi' the gospel, till ye're fairly drookit wi't. But you just gang awa' hame, and sit doon by your fireside, gie your wings a bit flap, and ye're as dry as ever again." The Rev. Charles Roberts, the author's great grandfather, was an Episcopal clergyman, and chaplain to the troops at Dundee. One Sabbath morning, on his way to the military chapel, he was accosted by two young officers from the barracks. One of them engaged Mr Roberts in conversation, while the other, as had been previously concerted, snatched his sermon from his pocket. They had expected that in the confusion of discovering his loss, he would be unable to proceed with a discourse, and that the result would afford occasion for merriment with their companions. They were disappointed. Instead of evincing embarrassment, Mr Roberts deliberately announced as his text Proverbs xiv. 9:—"Fools make a mock at sin." He preached powerfully and with effect. The military striplings waited upon him at the close of the service, returned his MS., and begged his forgiveness.

Dr Lawson, minister of the Associate church at Selkirk, was particularly at home in the pulpit. He wore a yellow wig. "When powdering wigs became fashionable," writes his biographer, "Mrs Lawson thought his should be conformed, and, without telling him of it—for he never would have given his consent

* The Duke of Hamilton possesses a seat in Arran.

—she powdered it one Sabbath morning before he left for the pulpit. He put it on without noticing the innovation. The day was very warm, and in the midst of his sermon he was disturbed by the perspiration drops on his face, rendered more than usually disagreeable by their mixture with the powder. After several applications with the handkerchief to his brow, nose, and eyes, he at length took off his wig, and seeing it all over with what he thought was dust, he deliberately knocked it on the sides of the pulpit, and shook out the powder; and having again put it on, he resumed his discourse."

The celebrated Dr John Erskine of Greyfriars, Edinburgh, was remarkable for the evenness of his temper. His handkerchief had disappeared every Sabbath during his descent from the pulpit, and suspicion could only fall on an elderly female, who, according to the practice of the times, sat on the pulpit stair. In order to discover the depredator, Mrs Erskine sewed the corner of the handkerchief to the minister's pocket. Returning from the pulpit, he felt a gentle pull, when, turning round and tapping the old woman on the shoulder, he exclaimed, "No the day, honest woman; no the day."

The Rev. Mr Shirra had repeatedly nominated one of his hearers to an office in the kirk-session, but the office-bearer elect had always made some excuse immediately prior to his ordination. As the Dr was proceeding to the act of ordination on one occasion, the person in question rose and said that he was not suited for such an office. Mr Shirra promptly answered his hesitating hearer, "Come awa doon; do ye no ken that the Master had ance need of an ass!"

The following cases of reproof were conducted by hands less sparing. The Rev. Walter Dunlop, minister of the United Secession Church at Dumfries, was

the most reputed of Scottish clerical humorists of the age just past. A member of his congregation in humble life had been presented with a gay, parti-coloured vest by his son, a college student. It became part of his holiday attire, but was scarcely in keeping with his age or the gravity of his deportment. One Sabbath, while attending Divine service in Mr Dunlop's church, he fell asleep during the first prayer, and so remained in a standing posture when the others of the congregation had, at the close of the exercise, resumed their seats. Mr Dunlop looked at him attentively as he announced his text, and thereafter exclaimed, "Willie, my man, ye may sit down—a' the folks, I think, hae noo seen your braw new waistcoat."

The Rev. Alexander Isdale, minister of Dron, (1807-34,) was noted for his adherence to old customs, and a blunt straightforward mode of expression. The now obsolete system of *perlicuing*—that is, of giving a summary of the discourses preached by the various clerical assistants at the Communion season—he persevered in long after it had been abandoned by his contemporaries. Mr Isdale's summation was generally conjoined with criticisms on the discourses, not uniformly of a commendatory description. Having on one occasion made somewhat severe strictures on the sermon delivered at the morning service, the minister who had preached in the afternoon, and who was still in the pulpit, quietly pulled his coat as a hint that he should deal more leniently with his discourse. Turning to his reverend assistant, Mr Isdale exclaimed aloud, "Ye needna be fear'd, man; I'll no meddle wi' yours. I never heard onything frae you that was worth the comin' owre."

An aged minister, addressing his assistant, remarked that it was singular how he felt more fatigued in

hearing him than in preaching himself. The assistant replied that he experienced a similar feeling when his reverend constituent was in the pulpit. "Then," rejoined the minister, "I pity the folk that have to hear us baith."

A minister had been called on to read from the pulpit a public edict which was obnoxious to him. Unwilling to hazard the loss of his living by a refusal, he commenced the reading of the document, with this preamble—"Brethren, I am instructed to read the following paper, but I do not find that you are called on to hear it." The hint was understood, and the entire congregation proceeded to retire ere the minister had read a single sentence of the obnoxious document.

A chapter of anecdotes might be formed illustrative of the *prejudices of the pulpit*. I myself was acquainted with an old clergyman who would not preach in a pulpit covered with red cloth. He maintained that the colour savoured of Popery, and was associated with "the beast."

The adoption of the Church Paraphrases, about eighty years ago, had been keenly resisted in the General Assembly by the older clergy, who maintained that it was essentially erroneous to seek other aids to devotion than those contained in the metrical version of the Psalms. The Rev. Colin Campbell, minister of Renfrew, was especially opposed to the use of the Paraphrases, and had formed a resolution that no compositions other than the Psalms of David should be sung by his congregation. On the evening of a communion Sabbath, the clerical brother who had been assisting him at tables opened the service by giving out a portion of one of the lately-authorised translations. This was intolerable to Mr Campbell, who, before the precentor could begin, started up from

the side of his reverend assistant, where he had been seated, and with emphatic utterance exclaimed, "Let us sing a part of the 72d Psalm, the 8th verse—

'His large and great dominion shall
From sea to sea extend.'

Wi' a' yer hymn-hymnin'," he added, "is there any hymn like that?"

Repeating tunes were equally obnoxious to some of the older divines. The Rev. Robert Shirra, minister of the Secession Church at Yetholm, was peculiar in his manners, frequently exhibiting his eccentricities in the pulpit. His precentor, John Cowan, had, without previously consulting him, ventured to use a repeating tune. Mr Shirra, while the precentor was about to repeat the line, brought the pulpit Bible* somewhat heavily on his head, exclaiming, "Stop, John! When the Lord repeats, we'll repeat."

The late Dr Pringle, of Perth, had a habit of blundering in the pulpit. Having occasion to quote the words "from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot," he misquoted them thus—"from the crown of the foot to the sole of the head," and then correcting himself, fairly overcame the risible faculties of his audience by saying, "Toots! from the sole of the head to the crown of the foot."

The following case of obliviousness in the pulpit occurred under my own personal observation. The Rev. Dr H. had been assisting a reverend brother at the dispensation of the Communion. During the evening service, before announcing his text, he repeatedly turned over the leaves of the Bible in a state of evident confusion. Thereafter, the Doctor made the following statement:—"My friends, I cannot find

* The Scottish pulpit Bible is generally a heavy quarto.

the text! I believe it to be in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the 13th chapter, and the 22d verse, and so have I marked on the top of my sermon. But I'm wrong; it's not there. The text is, I remember, 'Suffer the word of exhortation;' but where those words are, I can't tell you. Perhaps your minister knows." Looking over the side of the pulpit to the incumbent, he said, "Ho! can you tell me where to find it?" The minister replied, "You were quite right—look at the verse." "Luke!" said the Doctor, addressing the audience; "I thought that it was in Hebrews; but your minister tells me that is in Luke—Luke's Gospel. Did you say the 30th chapter, and the 22d verse? Well, if it's not there, it is somewhere else. I know it's in the Bible. And so I shall proceed with my discourse." The members of the congregation found that the Gospel by Luke contained twenty-four chapters only; and the homely manner of the reverend Doctor in his dilemma was more than sufficient to provoke a smile. On his descent from the pulpit, at the close of the service, he was informed that he had correctly announced the text at the outset, but that it was contained in the middle clause of the verse. "You are quite right," said the Doctor to his informant, "now that I remember;" and so saying he waved his hand and called aloud to the congregation, as they were dispersing through the churchyard, "The text is in the Hebrews after all. You'll find it when you get home."

A minister in Arran is said to have made the following intimation from the pulpit:—"My friends, there will be no Lord's-day here next Sabbath; it's the sacrament owre at Kilmory, and I'll be there."

According to his biographer, the late Rev. Dr Lawson of Selkirk forgot his marriage-day. To be out of

the way, when a bridegroom, he paid a visit to the Rev. Mr Greig of Lochgelly, not intending to return till he should bring his bride home. The marriage had been fixed to take place at Peebles, on Tuesday forenoon. On the same forenoon, while engaged in conversation, he suddenly exclaimed, "Mr Greig, is not this my marriage-day?" He immediately set off for Peebles, which he reached in the evening. His intended would not receive him, and he had to return to Selkirk alone!

Dr Lawson was reputed for indulging in those sallies of humour, which not unfrequently avail in conveying salutary counsel when a graver method would prove ineffectual. His medical adviser had contracted the unworthy habit of using profane oaths. The Doctor had sent for him to consult him upon the state of his health, when, after hearing a narrative of his complaints, the physician rather angrily said, "D—— it, sir, you are the slave of a vile habit, and you will not soon recover unless you at once give it up." "And what is the habit you refer to?" inquired the patient. "It is your practice of smoking—the use of tobacco is injuring your constitution." "I find it is an expensive habit," said Dr Lawson, "and if it is injuring me, I shall abandon it; but will you permit me to give you a hint, too, as to a vile habit of your own; and which, were you to give it up, would be a great benefit to yourself, and comfort to your friends?" "What is that?" inquired the M.D. "I refer to your habit of profane swearing," replied the divine. "True," said Dr ——, "but that is not an expensive habit, like yours." "Doctor!" rejoined Lawson, "I warn you that you will discover it to be a very expensive habit indeed, when the account is handed to you."

Another anecdote of a similar nature is recorded of

Dr Lawson. He was dining at a friend's house. A gentleman of the party was in conversation frequently employing the words, "The devil take me." Dr Lawson at length arose, and ordered his horse. The host was surprised, and insisted upon his remaining, as dinner had scarcely begun. But nothing could prevail on him to do so; and when pressed to give a reason for his abrupt departure, he replied, "That gentleman there" (pointing to him) "has been praying that the devil would take him; and as I have no wish to be present at the scene, I beg to be allowed to depart."

Dr Lawson was remarkable for the happy application of passages of Scripture. At the commencement of his ministry, he was told by one of his hearers, of rather a consequential turn of mind, that the people were pleased with his sermons, but by no means with his texts. "I should not have wondered," he replied, "if they had found fault with my discourses; but why should they find fault with the Word of God?" "I do not know," said the petulant individual, "but that's what they say, and I aye like to speak a' my mind." "Do you know," inquired Dr Lawson, "what Solomon says of such as you?" "No," replied the man. "And what does Solomon say?" "He says," rejoined the Doctor, "'A fool uttereth all his mind, but a wise man keepeth it till after.'" Dr Lawson's call to Selkirk had been singularly cordial. One individual only was opposed to it. During a diet of pastoral visitation, at this person's house, he entered into conversation with him in an easy and friendly style. His mildness, however, was not reciprocated; the individual seeking every opportunity to find fault with him. He had consented after some solicitation to partake of tea with the family. At the conclusion of that repast, the ungracious host accused his young pastor of uttering a

falsehood. "I am not aware of having committed so grave a misdemeanour," said the minister. "Yes," rejoined the man, "you have; for, when I asked you to stay and take tea with us, you replied that you would not, and yet you have done both; is not this telling a lie?". "You must have read the story," answered Dr Lawson, "of the angels in Sodom, who, when Lot pressed them to enter his house and lodge with him during the night, refused, and said, 'Nay, but we will abide in the streets all night;' and, instead of doing so, when Lot pressed them much, 'they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.' Now, do you suppose that these angels told a lie?" "No, they only changed their minds." "And so I, too, have just changed my mind, and have remained to partake of your fare." The upbraider was undone.

At a subsequent period of his ministry, Dr Lawson was appointed Professor in the Divinity Hall of the Associate Church. One morning he appeared in the Hall with his wig somewhat *tousie*,* and all on one side. A student whispered to his neighbour, "See, his wig is no redd the day." The Doctor heard, but took no notice of it at the time; but when it came to the turn of this student to deliver a discourse, he was invited to the pulpit with these words from the professor—"Come awa, Mr——, and we'll see wha's got the best redd wig."

A reverend gentleman in Perth, whose church was usually well attended, having observed some of the pews empty on a particular side, administered from the pulpit a severe rebuke for the desertion of the sanctuary. After the sermon, he was reminded by his daughter that he had been wasting his words, since those who were in the church were not guilty of the offence

* Dishevelled.

he pointed at, and the others to whom his remarks applied were beyond his hearing. "Never fear that, my lass," said the Doctor, "if you say ill of anybody, he is sure to hear of it."

The late Rev. Robert Clason, of Logie, being possessed of a singularly gentle and retiring nature, was most reluctant to reprove. When he did so, the reproof was in few words, but these not to be forgotten. He happened to be an inside passenger in the stage-coach which, early in the century, was the only weekly conveyance between Stirling and Glasgow. A blustering fellow-passenger had in the form of oaths repeatedly mentioned the devil's name. His oaths increasing in vehemence, he began to use irreverently the name of the Supreme. "Stop, sir," said Mr Clason, "else one or other of us must go out. So long as you used the name of your own master I was silent, but I shall not hear you speak irreverently of mine." The rebuke was effectual.

There is a well-known story of the Rev. Mr Shirra. Having in his old age retired from public duty at Kirkcaldy, he took up his abode in Stirling, his native town. As he was seated one day on the parapet of the old Stirling Bridge, two young officers from the Castle made up to him. Having resolved to enjoy a joke at his expense, one of them addressed him: "Your occupation is gone, Mr Shirra. Have you heard the song,

'Some says the de'il's dead,
And buried in Kirkcaldy'?"

"In case it's true," responded Mr Shirra, "let's pray for twa puir faitherless bairns."

The late Rev. George More, minister of the Secession church, North Shields, father of the late Professor Shank More, of Edinburgh University, was noted for his humorous and ready answers. He was riding on

horseback one stormy day, enveloped in a loose cloak of large proportions, and having a broad scarlet neck. By the strong action of the wind, the cloak was tossing about in all directions, when an English gentleman rode up on a spirited charger. The gentleman's horse shied and almost threw the rider. "That cloak of yours would frighten the devil!" said the Englishman. "Man," replied Mr More, "that's just my trade."

Of the Rev. Walter Dunlop, of the Secession Church, Dumfries, many anecdotes are in circulation. Riding one day in the country, he was asked by a fop why his pony's tail wagged so. "Just," said Dunlop, "what makes your tongue wag—weakness."—There is a similar story of the eccentric Rev. Mr Thom, of Govan. A country laird, who had lately been elevated to the office of a county magistrate, meeting Mr Thom on horseback, attempted jocularity by remarking that he was more ambitious than his Master, who was content to ride upon an ass. "They canna be gotten noo," said Mr Thom, "for they're a' made Justices o' the Peace."

The Reverend Mr Walker, of Muthil, was preaching in a neighbouring parish. Next day he was met by one of the resident landowners, who explained to the reverend gentleman that he had not been hearing him on the Sabbath afternoon, as he felt he could not *digest* more than one sermon. "I rather think," said Mr Walker, "the appetite is more at fault than the digestion."

The Rev. Mr Dunlop, in a journey, had occasion to pass through a hamlet in the parish of Caerlaverock. It was a long straggling village, with a farm-steading at each end. In passing the first of these farms in his route, he discovered that the fowls had got among the corn, and intimated the fact to a servant-girl at the

steading. As he passed on, he heard the girl call out, "Deil chouk thae geese, they're aye in the corn." When he reached the opposite end of the village, he found the farmer's swine among his corn. A servant in pursuit exclaimed, "Deil chouk thae swine!" "He canna wun yet, my woman," said Mr Dunlop; "he's choukin' geese at the ither end o' the town."—There was an attempt to alarm Mr Dunlop by the feigned appearance of an apparition. He was in the habit of walking on moonlight nights in a plantation near his house. A figure in spectral vestments suddenly stood before him. "Ay, ay," exclaimed Mr Dunlop, altogether unmoved, "is this a general risin', or are ye just takin' a daunner* by yersel?" The apparition retired.

Mr Dunlop was walking from Dumfries to Langholm on a Saturday. The day was hot, and he paused at an inn by the way to quench his thirst, which he did with some inferior small beer. Returning a few days after, he again sought a drink at the same hospitium. The gudewife, on pouring out a draught, exclaimed, "I doot, Mr Dunlop, that the ale's deid a' thegither the day." "I dinna wonder, my woman," he replied, "for it was very weakly when I was here on Saturday."

The Rev. Mr Pullar, minister of the Secession congregation at Balfron, had his garden often plundered. At length his suspicions fell upon a neighbour, a person resident in the hamlet. One autumn day, when the fruit was ripening, he took occasion to visit the suspected party. After conversing with him on a variety of topics, Mr Pullar remarked at parting, "By the by, John, the pear-tree at the north corner of the garden will be quite ready

* Saunter.

this week." Mr Pullar's garden was unmolested ever afterwards.

An amusing case is recorded of *coup-de-main* on the part of Mr John Gray, the first minister of Dollar after the Revolution. Mr Gray possessed two estates, and being a man of sterling probity, he was intrusted by his parishioners and others with the keeping of their savings. Some mischievous report got abroad that his credit was doubtful; and finding there was to be an unusual run upon him, he had recourse to an ingenious device for preventing demands which he was at the time unable to satisfy. Along the wall of the deposit-room, he placed a large number of pewter pint-measures, filled with sand almost to the brim. Into the small space left at the mouth of the vessels, he inserted a number of coins, both of gold and silver, so that they presented the appearance of being filled with the precious metals. Of course, some were really filled with coins; and so, on the first batch of applicants requesting their deposits, the contents of one of the vessels were emptied on the table. The simple rustics, seeing the large stores of money which the minister had beside him, at once confessed that they had been deceived by a false report, and so restored the cash to the reverend banker. His credit was thoroughly restored.

The following incidents in connexion with the Rev. James Robertson, minister of Lochbroom, are presented in the words of the Rev. Dr Thomas Ross, in his statistical account of this parish. Mr Robertson ministered at Lochbroom in the middle of the last century:—

"Soon after his settlement," writes Dr Ross, "Mr Robertson, while on a visit to his predecessor at Fearn, was present in the church of that parish, a Gothic

building, covered with large gray flags in place of slates, when, during divine service, the roof came suddenly down upon the congregation, throwing out the walls with irresistible force. Mr Robertson, remaining unhurt, made directly for the principal door; and, seeing the lintel ready to give way, he placed his shoulder under the end of it, and stood in that position till as many of the people as could move escaped. He then extricated his friend, almost suffocated under the canopy of the pulpit, and a mass of stones and rubbish. For this extraordinary feat of strength he was always afterwards called '*Am ministeir laidir*,' the strong minister.

In opposition to the Earl of Cromarty, his patron, and the greater portion of his parishioners, Mr Robertson remained firm in his loyalty during the rebellion of 1745, and even rendered important service to the royalist cause. Several of his people, who had joined in the insurrection, were, subsequent to its suppression, carried to London to undergo an assize. "When the trial of these unhappy men, who were taken prisoners in 1746, came on," proceeds Dr Ross, "Mr Robertson set out on a journey of seven hundred miles, to London (an arduous undertaking at that time) at his own private expense, that he might use all his influence in their behalf. He arrived while Hector Mackenzie, a retainer of the Earl of Cromarty, and a respectable man, was on his trial; and, to his unspeakable mortification, in spite of all his interest and exertions, Mackenzie was condemned. But the '*ministeir laidir*' was not thus to be put off. He went directly to the Duke of Newcastle, and earnestly entreated his intercession with the sovereign for mercy to the condemned criminal. The Duke received him favourably, and satisfied him with a fair promise that the man's life

would be spared. He was, however, soon alarmed by a hint from some of his friends, that such promises by the Duke were not always to be relied on, and worked his honest way again into the presence of his Grace, where he earnestly renewed his intercession. The Duke, to get rid of his importunity, renewed his promise, with the offer of his hand. The minister grasped his hand in his own awful fist, and gave it such a squeeze, that his Grace in agony exclaimed, 'Yes, yes, yes! Mr Robertson; you shall have him, you shall have him.' This promise was not to be forgotten, and the man was saved."

"While detained in London, Mr Robertson one day, in crossing the Thames in a boat, was assailed by a loud voice from a hulk, then lying in the river, with these words, in the Gaelic language, viz.:—'*O! a Mhaisteir Seamus, am bheil thu' g'am fha'gails' an so?*' 'Oh, Mr James, are you going to leave me here?' Mr Robertson, instantly recognising the speaker, answered: '*Ah! a Dhonuil, bheil cuimhn agad air là na biodaig?*'—*i.e.*, 'Ah, Donald, do you remember the day of the dirk?' The despairing culprit replied, '*Och, a Mhaisteir Seamus, is olc an t-aite cuimhnachan so!*'—*i.e.*, 'Oh, Mr James, bad place of remembrance is THIS!' The conversation ceased. The speaker was a Donald Mackenzie, a bold and powerful man, well known to Mr Robertson as a quondam parishioner. The ruffian had, a few years before, come to the minister for baptism to his child, which, as he was grossly ignorant, was inflexibly refused. The fellow, after repeated refusals till he should exhibit some suitable qualification, resolved to extort by force what he could not obtain by solicitation, and prevailed on a neighbour of his, another rude and athletic Highlander, to accompany and assist him in this unprin-

cipled attempt. They found the minister at some distance from the manse, when Donald renewed his suit for baptism to his child; but after a short examination he was found as unqualified as ever, and positively refused. Upon which the two fellows laid violent hands on the minister, swearing that they would never let him go till he would comply with the request. A desperate struggle ensued; and Donald, perceiving that the minister was stronger than himself and his neighbour, drew his dirk, and inflicted a wound on Mr Robertson's right arm, notwithstanding which he beat the two, and sent Donald home again to study his catechism. The day of retribution for the violence of the *dirk* was come; and Mr Robertson, in the true spirit of his holy calling, lost no time in employing all his influence in favour of the desponding criminal. His exertions were attended with success. Poor Donald received a free pardon, returned home to his native country, and lived for many years one of the most attached and grateful of the parishioners of his reverend benefactor."

The Presbyterian system of Church government, by placing the clergy on a footing of equality, tends to the promotion of social and familiar intercourse among the members of the sacred order. Yet it must be acknowledged that the intercourse is not uniformly harmonious, and that a desire to indulge in something beyond the banter of established friendship frequently predominates. The late Rev. Dr Smart, of the Secession Church at Stirling, thus accosted a clerical brother whom he suspected of plagiarism:—"I hear, sir, you have become a strict Sabbatarian." His friend answered, thinking that the saying might be complimentary, "Have I not always been so?" "Oh," was the reply, "but you have got now beyond us all, for I hear you

neither think your own thoughts nor speak your own words on that holy day." The sarcasm was crushing.

Dr William Shaw, a minister of the Secession Church in Ayrshire, had received his degree from an American college, and Dr Smart had obtained, about the same time, his doctorate from Glasgow University. At their first meeting after the attainment of their academical honours, Dr Smart said, "Will, I would not have lifted an American degree laid at my feet." Dr Shaw replied, "Ah, man, see ye no the difference between us? Your fame has only travelled between Stirling and Glasgow, while mine has been ower the Atlantic and back again."—The late Rev. Dr Dow of Erroll and the Rev. Dr Duff of Kilspindie were ministers of neighbouring parishes in the Carse of Gowrie, and had maintained a long and uninterrupted intimacy. On a New-Year's day, Dr Dow sent to his friend, who was a great snuffer, the gift of a snuff-box, thus inscribed:—

"Dr Dow to Dr Duff.
Snuff! Snuff! Snuff!"

The minister of Kilspindie resolved not to be outdone either in generosity or in pungency of humour. Though withal sober and exemplary, the pastor of Erroll was well known to enjoy a glass of toddy with his friends. So his clerical brother sent him a hot-water jug, bearing on the pewter lid the following couplet:—

"Dr Duff to Dr Dow,
Fou! Fou! Fou!"

One of the most gifted of living humorists in connexion with the Established Church is the Rev. Dr Gillan, formerly of St John's Church, Glasgow, and now minister of Inchinnan, Renfrewshire. The Doctor obtained his present living on the resignation of

the Rev. Dr Lockhart, who succeeded to the estate of Milton-Lockhart. Dr Lockhart left a number of his sermons and other documents in an attic room of the manse, intending to remove them subsequent to his return from a continental tour. He had occasion to communicate with Dr Gillan, and in the course of his letter he expressed a hope that the manuscripts were safe and free from damp. Dr Gillan replied that "all the papers were quite dry, *especially the sermons.*" Dr Lockhart was finding fault with Dr Gillan for cutting down two fine ash-trees, near the manse, which he had planted with his own hand, and which, in consequence, he regarded with peculiar interest. "You deserve to be buried under them," said the reverend reprover. "Then you would have ashes to ashes," responded Dr Gillan.

Dr Gillan was, one winter night, sailing from Liverpool to Glasgow. A foppish youth resolved to enjoy some light conversation with the Scottish parson. "Pray, Doctor, can you tell me why that is called the dog-star?" said the youth, pointing in the direction of that luminary. "Because it's a sky-terrier, I suppose," was the witty reply.

The Rev. John Anderson, minister of Fochabers, had a particular aptitude for business, which led to his being appointed a county magistrate and local factor to the Duke of Gordon, whose estates lay in the neighbourhood. A clerical neighbour sent him a letter through the post-office, with the following poetical address:—

"The Rev. John Anderson,
Factor to his Grace,
Minister of Fochabers,
And Justice of the Peace."

Mr Jervise, in his "Memorials of Angus and

Mearns," mentions a Sir James Strachan, parish minister of Keith, in Banffshire, who was deposed for nonconformity in 1690. "Some curious stories," writes Mr Jervise, "are told of this clergyman, whose memory is still cherished at Keith; and it is said, that when the late Admiral Sir Richard Strachan (who was a cadet of the Thornton family) went there to cull information regarding his predecessor, he met with an old inhabitant who, on being asked if he had ever heard of such a person, naively replied—'Ou, ay! he was weel kent:—

'The beltit Knicht o' Thornton,
An' Laird o' Pittendriech;
An' maister James Strachan,
The minister o' Keith!'

The late distinguished Principal Hill of St Andrews had been assailed in the General Assembly by the Rev. Mr Burns, minister of Forgan, in a lengthened and intemperate speech. The Principal rose to address the house as Mr Burns resumed his seat; but instead of replying to the invectives of his reverend antagonist, he calmly remarked, "Moderator, it is well known that *Burns** generally run down *Hills.*" The argument was foreclosed.

The late Rev. Dr Laurie of Newburn published a volume of Discourses. A clerical neighbour bore him a grudge, and resolved to seek retribution by mortifying his vanity. Purchasing a copy of Dr Laurie's volume, which had just been issued, he tore out the title-page, and handing it to the waiter before a Presbytery dinner, requested that an ounce of snuff, which he should publicly order, might be wrapped in it. On the removal of the cloth, the snuff was sent for as arranged, and thereafter handed round the table in

* Rivulets.

the title-page of Dr Laurie's volume. "How soon Dr Laurie's book has gone into the snuff-shop!" exclaimed the reverend conspirator!

A reverend gentleman preached on the Sabbath previous to his marriage from the text, "He went on his way rejoicing." On the following Sabbath he discoursed from the words, "Oh, wretched man that I am." The next Presbytery day, he was assailed by the waggery of his brethren. He implored silence, using these words of the apostle, "I wish that all men were not almost, but altogether such as I am," —when an arch brother exclaimed, "Finish your quotation, 'except these bonds.'"

Dr Lawson of Selkirk delighted in surprising his friends by odd and startling sayings. When he was appointed to the chair of Divinity in the Secession Church, the Rev. John Johnstone of Ecclefechan, who had been the doctor's tutor, sent his son to the Selkirk Hall. On presenting the usual certificate from his father as Moderator of the Session, Dr Lawson addressed him abruptly, "There is a woe, my young man, pronounced against your father." The son looked disconcerted and astonished, but the humorous Professor made all right by adding, "All men speak well of him."

The old clergyman of the rural parish was, some sixty years ago, a man of most primitive ways, and in some cases of deep-rooted prejudices. There is a story often told of the Highland minister at the dinner in Holyrood Palace. During the sittings of the General Assembly, which, in the month of May, are held annually at Edinburgh, a nobleman representing the sovereign, and styled the Lord High Commissioner, is present at the deliberations of the Court. In the evenings, he entertains the members at dinner in the

state apartments of Holyrood. At the dinner the rarities of the season are provided, and among these are commonly a few dishes of green pease. The cost of a dish of pease so early in the season is about two guineas. A Highland minister had been offered a potato by the attendant. "Ne'er mind," said he; "I'll just help myself to the pickle pease that's nearest me." And so saying, he transferred the entire supply to his plate.

"What will you be helped to?" said the Moderator of the Presbytery to the Rev. James Oliphant, minister of Dumbarton, who, though he had lost his eyesight, regularly presented himself at the Presbytery dinner. "I'll just tak what Andrew taks," was the reply. The individual so familiarly named was the Rev. Andrew White, minister of Kilmarnock. The anecdote can scarcely be adduced as illustrating clerical simplicity, for Mr White was understood to have a particular knowledge of good eating.

At an early period of life, I had occasion frequently to meet the Rev. John Paterson, an eccentric probationer of the Established Church, who was a frequent visitor at my paternal home. Mr Paterson had been employed as officiating clergyman to the troops stationed in the Barracks at Dundee. He conducted divine service in the open air, the Bible resting on a drum. His salary was £25 a year, and he obtained payment of it by passing a draft on some Government official, "for value delivered in divine service at the Barracks of Dundee."

The late Rev. Dr Rose of Drainie was not a simpleton. His clever sayings are often quoted in the north of Scotland. But the Doctor sometimes tripped in speech. He was to reside for a few weeks at a watering-place; and rejoicing in the prospect of cessation

from his public duties, he said to a friend that "he would neither preach nor pray for six weeks."

In the late statistical account, a minister in Perthshire, notorious for his hatred of dissent, thus boasts of the morals of his people:—"There is neither an ale-house nor a meeting-house in this parish." The Rev. William Johnston, of the Chapelshade, Dundee, had intimated at the close of the service one afternoon, that the Rev. Dr Kidd of Aberdeen would preach in the evening at a quarter past six o'clock. The eccentric Doctor, who was present, shouted from the body of the church, "None of your quarters; that's trifling with time; six o'clock precisely."

The Scottish Episcopal Church owes its origin to Archbishop Laud, whose High-Church principles are supposed to pervade it till this day. An anecdote is told of two ministers of that communion, who both attached much virtue to ecclesiastical order and adherence to the ecclesiasticism of the past. "I find I can make no impression on my people," said the one. "No wonder," replied the other, "Your church stands North and South."

The prejudices of clerical life in private are much akin to what we have characterised as the prejudices of the pulpit. They admit, however, of separate illustration. The establishment by Act of Parliament in 1744 of a fund for the support of the widows and children of the ministers of the Church, and which inferred the compulsory payment of an annual rate, encountered on the part of some of the rural clergy determined and unrelenting hostility. The Rev. Mr A., minister of Airlie, who had long waged unavailing warfare in resisting payment of his annual rate, married, when an octogenarian, his *herd lassie*,* a girl

* Shepherdess.

of fifteen, with the purpose of taking vengeance on the fund!

The opposition of some of the older ministers to the introduction of the Church Paraphrases has already been referred to. There were others who were especially desirous of obtaining a place for their own compositions in the collection prepared by the Assembly. A minister in Caithness sent a contribution to the Assembly's Committee, a verse of which is here presented as a specimen :—

"Satan shall rive them all in rags,
That wicked are and vain;
But if they 're good and do repent
They shall be sewed again."

My friend, Sheriff Barclay, contributes the three following paragraphs :—

The statistical account of Scotland, compiled by the parochial ministers, contains many singular statements. One minister, speaking of a chapel-of-ease in his parish, states, "this chapel *perambulates* a district of six miles." Another describes his parish as a mile in *length* and six miles in *breadth*. A clergyman, in mentioning the name of a parish as Ladykirk, states that some doubt exists as to who was the lady who gave her name to the parish; but that, after much inquiry, he was of opinion that the parish owed its name to one of the daughters of The Chisholm, who once was principal *heritor*.

It is well known that a radical difference exists in the idiom of Gaelic between that spoken in the north and west Highlands. The difference depends chiefly on the emphasis in pronunciation. A clergyman preaching beyond his province, in announcing that the *Elders* would now take up a collection for the conversion of the *Jews*, startled his audience by the

announcement that "the Pilgrims would now take up the collection for the conversion of the *Goats*." Another clergyman, officiating at a communion, raised the smile of his congregation by forbidding them in approaching the table to pass over their neighbour's *periwigs*, meaning thereby *pews* or *seats*.

A Presbytery in the north (to prevent mistakes—'tis fifty years ago) had a respected member of the name of *Honey*. At a large convivial party, sundry conundrums were proposed for solution. A venerable member of Presbytery, anxious to contribute his share to the common stock, propounded, Samson-like, the following riddle:—"Why is our Presbytery like a bee-skep?"* Whether or not the company saw the *sweet* solution, or, to vex the patriarch, there was an anxious silence, broken at last, by a fine young damsel upsetting the gravity of the circle by the laugh-inspiring answer, "Oh yes, I see it!—just because it contains so many drones." The same minister never thereafter ventured the same riddle.

The prejudices and weaknesses of some of the older and a few of the modern clergy are counterbalanced by the good-humoured pleasantness and *bonhommie* which have generally characterised the members of the clerical profession. The Rev. Mr Swan, minister of Auchtertool, was a person of singular equanimity of temper. A late Duke of Buccleuch had been hunting with his friend, Mr Ferguson of Raith, whose residence was in Mr Swan's parish. By an untoward adventure, a fat pig belonging to the reverend gentleman was destroyed by some of the hunting party. Next day the Duke and Mr Ferguson called at the manse to express regret and offer reparation. Mr Swan was satisfied as to the accidental nature of the

* Beehive.

casualty, and would not listen to the proposal of reimbursement. In the course of conversation, the Duke learned that Mr Swan had two sons who were educating for the ministry; and some years after his Grace evidenced his appreciation of the reverend gentleman's polite and generous behaviour by presenting both his sons to church-livings.

The manse of Melrose is situated close by the fine ruin of the Cathedral, and commands an interesting view of the Eildon Hills, but in the immediate foreground is the parish burying-ground. A lady having remarked to the Rev. Mr Thomson, a late incumbent, that it must be melancholy to live so near the churchyard, received the reply, "Madam, there is a beautiful prospect beyond *the grave*."

Our illustrations of the clerical department would be incomplete without some reference to the domestic establishment of the minister. The family at the manse is looked to, especially in the country, as an example to the parish; and, as a general rule, it is entitled to the privilege. From his respectable position in society, and the sacred nature of his calling, the parochial clergyman is a welcome visitor in the best families of his neighbourhood; and it is certainly his own fault should he not secure, as the partner of his home, one who is not only qualified to become a good housewife, but is fully disposed to be a ready helpmate in the social department of his duties. The celebrated Rev. Dr Alexander Webster of Edinburgh, the founder of the Ministers' Widows' Fund, was for some years minister of Culross. During his incumbency in that parish, he had been requested by a young gentleman to intercede on his behalf with a young lady, a parishioner of Culross, to whom he was devotedly attached, but who had hitherto declined his addresses. Dr Webster

undertook the mission, and so waited on the lady. She refused to listen to his pleading on behalf of his friend; but, in retiring from the apartment, remarked, "Had you spoken as well for yourself, perhaps you might have succeeded better." The hint was not lost. He had earnestly supported the cause of his friend; and he left himself free, on his next interview with the lady, to speak on his own behalf. As she had indicated, she was nothing loath to his new proposals; and afterwards agreed, as her relatives would not yield their consent, that the marriage ceremony should be performed in private. Mrs Webster, who was a model of her sex, and a pattern to ministers' wives, was a daughter of Colonel Erskine of Alva, and was nearly related to the noble family of Dundonald.

An anecdote is current of the late Rev. Mr H., who, having resolved to pay his addresses to one of the three daughters of the Rev. Mr W., determined to proceed cautiously in deciding as to their respective qualifications. He was ultimately led to a conclusion by the following circumstances:—He had been dining at C—— Manse, the three young ladies being present. After dinner, each of the misses was helped to cheese. One scraped the skin, a second pared it off, and a third ate it as it was. That evening Mr H. asked in marriage the young lady who had, by scraping her portion, indicated her desire for cleanliness combined with economy.

The late Rev. Dr Wightman, of Kirkmahoe, was a simple-minded clergyman of the old school. When a young man he paid his addresses to a lady in the parish, and his suit was accepted on the condition that it met the approval of the lady's mother. Accordingly the Doctor waited upon the matron, and stated his case. The good woman, delighted at the proposal, passed the usual Scottish compliment, "Deed, Doctor, you're far

owre guid for oo'r Janet. I'm sure she's no gude eneuch for ye." "Weel, weel," was the rejoinder, "ye ken best, so we'll say nae mair aboot it." No more was said, and the social intercourse of the parties continued on the same footing as before. About forty years after, Dr Wightman died a bachelor, and the lady an old maid.

When so much is expected at their hands, it is not matter of surprise that ministers' wives should, in prudence and general procedure, occasionally prove disappointing. The popular tune of "Jenny dang the weaver" owed its origin to an occurrence in which a minister's wife was the heroine. During the second year of the last Scottish Rebellion, the Rev. Mr Gardner, of Birse, Aberdeenshire, reputed for his humour and musical talents, was one evening playing over on his Cremona the notes of an air he had been composing, when a scene in the court-yard arrested his attention. His man "Jock," lately a weaver in the neighbouring village, having rudely declined to wipe the minister's shoes, as requested by Mrs Gardner, she administered a hearty drubbing to his shoulders with a cooking utensil, and compelled him to execute her orders. Witnessing the proceeding from the window, Mr Gardner was intensely amused, and gave the air he had just completed the name of "Jenny dang the weaver."

There is an anecdote of the triumph of a young scamp at the expense of a minister's helpmate. Mrs B., wife of the Rev. Mr B. of D., was somewhat older than her husband, and was possessed of a hasty temper. The tea-kettle had been sent to the tinsmith for repair, and his apprentice boy, on returning with it, had intimated a charge of fourpence. The lady remonstrated on the unreasonableness of the demand, and insisted that a

payment of twopence was more than ample. The boy maintained his claim, and a loud and angry altercation ensued. Disturbed by the noise, Mr B. appeared from his study, and inquired as to the cause of the fray. The youth hastened to explain—"I hae brocht the kettle, sir, and my maister says the price o' the mendin' is fourpence; but your mither there will no gie me ony mair than tippence." The youth's unhappy mistake as to the relationship of the lady to the minister was overpowering. Mrs B., fairly discomfited, retired to her chamber. Mr B. gave the youth sixpence, and commended his zeal on behalf of his employer.

The wife of the late distinguished Principal Campbell, of Aberdeen, was desirous of furthering her husband's literary enterprises. She entertained the notion that the Principal was naturally indolent, and required to be kept at his books. A story obtained among the Principal's contemporaries, that on one occasion he was actually locked into his study by his indomitable spouse, who had, however, the mortification to discover, on her proceeding to his release some hours afterwards, that he had, during the whole period of his imprisonment, been regaling himself with his Cremona.

The following anecdote has been associated with the name of more than one clergyman's helpmate. The minister had been entertaining at dinner a clerical friend from some distance. The evening was unpropitious, and the friend was invited by the minister to remain during the night, and had accepted the invitation. They walked together for some time in the manse garden. At dusk the minister asked his visitor to step into the manse, while he would give directions to his man-servant in regard to his friend's conveyance being got ready in the morning. As the stranger

entered the manse, the minister's wife mistook him for her husband in the twilight: she raised the pulpit Bible, which chanced to be on the lobby table, and bringing the full weight of it across the stranger's shoulders, exclaimed emphatically, "Take that for asking that ugly wretch to stay all night!" How the lady looked on discovering the blunder is not related; but the visitor is understood to have relinquished his intention of tarrying for the night.

Mr Kennedy, in his curious work—"Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire," writes as follows concerning the wife of the Rev. James Fraser, minister of Alness:—"A cold, unfeeling, bold, unheeding, worldly woman was his wife. Never did her godly husband sit down to a comfortable meal in his own house, and often would he have fainted from sheer want of needful sustenance but for the considerate kindness of some of his parishioners. She was too insensate to try to hide her treatment of him, and well was it for him, on one account, that she was. His friends thus knew of his ill-treatment, and were moved to do what they could for his comfort. A godly acquaintance arranged with him to leave a supply of food in a certain place, beside his usual walk, of which he might avail himself when starved at home. Even light and fire in his study were denied to him on the long, cold winter evenings; and as his study was his only place of refuge from the cruel scourge of his wife's tongue and temper, there, shivering and in the dark, he used to spend his winter evenings at home. Compelled to walk in order to keep himself warm, and accustomed to do so when preparing for the pulpit, he always kept his hands before him as feelers in the dark, to warn him of his approaching the wall at either side of the room. In this way he actually wore a hole through the plaster

at each end of his accustomed beat, on which some eyes have looked that glistened with light from other fire than that of love, at the remembrance of his cruel wife. But the godly husband had learned to thank the Lord for the discipline of this trial. Being at a Presbytery dinner alone, some one of the gentlemen proposed as a toast, the health of their wives, and, turning to Mr Fraser, said, "You, of course, will cordially join in drinking to this toast." "So I will, and so I ought," Mr Fraser said, "for mine has been a better wife to me than any one of yours has been to you." "How so?" they all exclaimed. "She has sent me," was his reply, "seven times a day to my knees, when I would not otherwise have gone, and that is more than any of you can say of yours."

The Associate Minister of Selkirk would not have submitted so tamely as did the reverend incumbent of Alness to the drilling of an unworthy spouse. "One day," writes the author of his memoir, "he surprised Mrs Lawson by bursting into an immoderate fit of laughter as he entered the manse. On being questioned as to the cause of it, he said, 'As I was coming down the street, I saw Jock Cuthers getting a special drubbing from the hands of his wife.' Mrs Lawson remarked that she did not see in that any great cause for laughter, but the contrary. 'Ay,' replied the Doctor, 'it may be so; but the thing that makes me laugh so is, not that Jock got licked, but that he was so silly as to allow her. He should be master in his own house.'"

Ministers' wives have been known, like some of their husbands, to entertain strong prejudices and dislikes. The wife of a clergyman of the Established Church entertained a hatred of dissent. Hearing a person in the neighbourhood denounced for a variety

of offences, she added, "An' forbye a', he's a Dissenter."

There are some anecdotes relating to females having evidenced an attachment for clergymen, when the affection was unhappily not reciprocated. Such stories must necessarily be accepted as of doubtful authenticity. The celebrated Archbishop Leighton, when he held the bishopric of Dunblane, was in the habit of frequenting a solitary walk by the margin of the river Allan, which still bears the name of the *Bishop's Walk*. It was supposed that he here prepared in solitary meditation for his public duties, and few ventured to intrude on his retirement. On one occasion, the usual respectful deference to the Bishop was disregarded. The aggressor was a clergyman's widow, to whose family Leighton had exercised a highly benevolent and extensive liberality, and which, unfortunately, the widow had been led to construe into an expression of attachment for her person more deep-rooted than friendship. To satisfy herself as to the reality of her hope, and probably with the view of overcoming the natural diffidence of the Bishop, she suddenly rushed into his presence in his walk, and declared that an important revelation had been made to her, which she felt bound immediately to make known to him. The prelate asked her to proceed. "Then," said the widow, "last night it was revealed to me that your Lordship and I would be married." "Indeed," said the Bishop; "but the revelation has not yet been made to me, and surely we must wait till it be made to both parties."—The Rev. Professor B. was one day addressed by a lady in these words:—"The people are saying that you and I are to be married." "But we'll cheat them," was the Professor's ready answer.

Unmarried clergymen usually intrust the management of their domestic affairs to an experienced servant—one who is well reputed for her carefulness and discretion. These housekeepers sometimes venture to give the minister a word of counsel, or "a bit of their mind." "I 'll take a little gruel to-night," said a young clergyman one Sabbath evening to his housekeeper. "Ye 'll be the better o 't, sir," said Janet, "for I observed in the kirk that there was something soor on your stamach."—The late Rev. Dr Wallace of Whitekirk had long in his service a faithful though homely female servant, who was justly respected by all visitors at the manse. Among these was the late Earl of Haddington, a good-humoured country nobleman. "That 's a fine pig!" said the Earl, as, accompanied by old Janet, he was surveying the minister's farm-stock. "Ou ay, it 's an uncommonly gude swine," was the reply; "an' we ca 't Tam, after yer lordship."

The following is related by his biographer of an early housekeeper of the Rev. Mr Story, of Roseneath, —"Come, Mary," he said one day, when a friend had come unexpectedly to dinner, "get dinner for Mr ——, you have something in the house; it can't take long to get ready." "It 'll just tak till it 's dune," said Mary, severely eyeing the stranger. On another occasion, a similar arrival created a similar necessity for a supplementary dinner. "Weel! weel!" said Mary, "if *he 's* to get his denner, something else maun stand."

The late Rev. Dr R. had a somewhat lofty manner of expressing himself. In the course of visiting his parish, he called at the cottage of an elderly female, who familiarly invited him to "come in by and sit doun." The Doctor, who expected a more respectful salutation, said, in stately tones, intended to check any further attempt at familiarity:—"Woman, I am

a servant of the Lord come to speak with you on the concerns of your soul." "Then, ye 'll be humble like your Maister," admirably rejoined the cottager. The doctor felt the reproof deeply, and never again sought to magnify himself at the expense of his office.

Ministers in the country employ a man-servant to dress the garden, manage the glebe, and attend to the out-door concerns of the parsonage. He enjoys the distinctive title of "the minister's man;" and if long in office he becomes closely identified with the cure. He is intimately concerned in the best interests of his master. A minister in the neighbourhood of Greenock was proceeding to the late International Exhibition. The man carried his luggage to the railway station. Hearing his master apply for an insurance ticket, he whispered to him confidentially, on his taking his seat in the carriage, "Ye'd better gie me the insurance ticket, sir, for they 're gie an' ready to tak thae things aff a corpse."—The "man" is sometimes humorous at the minister's expense. A late minister at Cardross was of somewhat penurious habits. The "man" complained that he even grudged corn for the mare. On proceeding to ride one day, the minister remarked, "The beast 's a little skeich,* John." "I am afraid," responded John, "that the caff† has ta'en its head."

William Wallace, a minister's man in the south of Scotland, had, in his youth, frequently obtained at the annual district ploughing-matches the premium awarded to the first ploughman. The minister, forgetful of his "man's" reputation, had ventured to criticise a portion of his tillage. "Weel, minister," rejoined Wallace, "if ye can preach as weel as I can plow, ye 'll tak the prize o' a' Nithsdale." The minister was silenced.

* High-mettled. † Chaff.

There is in every parish a local ecclesiastical court, known as the kirk-session, of which the minister is moderator or president, and the other permanent official or clerk is generally the parochial schoolmaster. The remaining members of the kirk-session are lay elders, elected out of all classes of the parishioners, the qualifications for office being prudent behaviour, sound discretion, and an unblemished life.

The kirk-session is empowered to regulate matters connected with the public dispensation of ordinances. About the year 1650, the kirk-session of St Andrews "ordainit that the minister mak public intimation, furth of the pulpit, that wemen shuld na wear cuifs* or huidis† upon their heads in tyme of divine service;" and that in order effectually to prevent disobedience to the injunction, the beadle should, on the following Sabbath, "go about with ane long pole and remove 'the huidis' from the heads of the refractory." The head-dresses which gave offence to the kirk-session were hoods such as elderly females formerly wore attached to their cloaks, and which were occasionally used for enveloping the cap or *mutch*.

The following story of ecclesiastical arrangement by a kirk-session is related by the Ettrick Shepherd. In pastoral districts, the shepherds are attended to church by their dogs, which generally repose quietly under the pews till the termination of the service. In a parish in Peeblesshire, to which the present anecdote refers, the shepherds' dogs had, in the prospect of release, acquired the practice of howling when the congregation rose to receive the benediction. To prevent the unseemly interruption, the kirk-session had enjoined that, contrary to the usual habit, the congregation should retain their seats when the blessing was

* A sort of cap. † Hoods.

pronounced. A stranger who happened to be officiating one Sabbath in the church, perceiving that the congregation did not stand as he rose to express the benediction, became a little agitated, and looked towards the elders' pew, as if appealing for explanation. One of the elders perceiving the minister's embarrassment, called out, "Say awa', sir; we're just keepin' our seats that we may cheat the dowgs!"

Mr Kennedy, in his work on the "Fathers in Rossshire," formerly quoted, records the following narrative in connexion with the settlement of the Rev. Eneas Sage, minister of Lochcarron, and the appointment of one of his parishioners to the eldership. I give the narrative in Mr Kennedy's own words:— "On the night of his first arrival at Lochcarron, an attempt was made to burn the house in which he lodged, and for some time after his induction his life was in constant danger. But the esteem he could not win as a minister, he soon acquired for his great physical strength. The first man in Lochcarron in these days was the champion at the athletic games. Conscious of his strength, and knowing that he would make himself respected by all if he could only lay big Rory on his back, who was acknowledged to be the strongest man in the district, the minister joined the people, on the earliest opportunity, at their games. Challenging the whole field, he competed for the prize in putting the stone, tossing the caber, and wrestling, and won an easy victory. His fame was established at once. The minister was now the champion of the district, and none was more ready to defer to him than he whom he had deprived of the laurel. Taking Rory aside to a confidential crack, he said to him, 'Now Rory, I am the minister, and you must be my elder, and we both must see to it that all the people attend church, observe the Sabbath, and conduct themselves

properly.' Rory fell in with the proposal at once. On Sabbath, when the people would gather to their games in the forenoon, the minister and his elder would join them, and each taking a couple by the hand, they would drag them to the church, lock them in, and then return to catch some more. This was repeated till none was left on the field. Then, stationing the elder with his cudgel at the door, the minister would mount the pulpit and conduct the service."

An elder is occasionally disposed to administer a word of counsel to the minister. A late minister of Peebles indulged in a metaphysical style of preaching, while his texts were generally selected from the less interesting portions of the sacred volume. One of his elders thus addressed him with animation, "Mr B., if ye winna gie evangelical sermons, ye micht at least gie evangelical texts."

When, some years ago, a proposal was made for the union of two sections of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, an elder of the more strict denomination, who opposed the union, remarked to a member of the other body who sought to further the amalgamation—"Weel, weel, ye 'll see what 'll come o't, we 'll hear o' naething but singing o' paraphrases and shavin' o' beards ilka Sabbath mornin'." Both these practices were obnoxious to the more rigid members of his sect.

A parishioner of parsimonious nature was offered the office of elder, but was reluctant to accept it, until the minister assured him that he was by law entitled to a "groat"* each day he stood at the plate, and a boll of meal at the close of each year. On the lapse of twelve months he called at the manse for the meal. The minister assured him that the promised reward was altogether a joke. The sage reply was, "The bow

* Fourpence.

o' meal may be a joke; but I hae taen guid care that the groat ilka Sabbath has been nae joke."

In some of the northern counties, there is almost in every parish a body of persons who bear the pre-eminent designation of "the men;" and who, in virtue of their claim to superior sanctity, are permitted to exercise a sort of general superintendence both over minister and kirk-session. They sit in church in a conspicuous position near the pulpit, and there appear with the distinctive badge of a dark handkerchief enveloping their temples. A candidate for admission into their ranks is called upon for a certain period of probation to sit in church with his head enclosed in a white handkerchief. Full admission into office is evidenced by his assumption of the dark-coloured badge. During divine service the *men* are entitled to nod approval, or groan disapprobation of the discourse; and the privilege was, in former times, not unfrequently exercised. At the communion season, they hold congregational meetings in the churchyard to supplement the public services in the church; and they are afforded by the minister an opportunity, at the Monday's dinner, of criticising the services of his assistants on the occasion. A distinguished clergyman from the south had been assisting at a communion in Ross-shire; and on the Monday was interested by meeting the *men* in the manse. He listened with attention to their homely criticisms of the various services on the occasion; but waited in vain for any allusion to his own. "You have not mentioned my name, gentlemen," said the reverend doctor, "I hope my services were not altogether unacceptable." "Ah! sir," promptly replied one of the *men*, "ye had fine psalms."

Mr Story, in describing the spiritual condition of

his father's parish at the commencement of his incumbency, writes:—"The religious aspect of the district in which Roseneath was situated was very cloudy. Sunday-schools, and the like agencies, were unknown. The holy communion was in all the parishes dispensed only once a year; and when it was dispensed in one parish, the churches of the neighbouring parishes were left vacant for the day, so that the minister and flock might resort to the 'Holy Fair.' It was a point of honour, in which each parish tried to rival its neighbour, that the communion services should be prolonged as much as possible, and it was by no means rare, that, beginning at eleven a.m., they should drag their slow length along till six or seven in the evening. While the communicants were receiving the sacrament at the successive tables in the church, the people outside clustered round the 'tent' (an erection exactly like a bathing box) in the churchyard, and listened to protracted preachings; one minister rising as soon as another sat down exhausted, with as dauntless a devotion as that of knight or squire in the 'desperate ring' at Flodden. The religious exercises of the day, however, were varied by a good deal of eating and drinking, either in the open air or the nearest public-houses. An old clergyman of a parish near Roseneath, used to remark with pride, when an extra gathering attended his communion, 'It was a creditable crood; there was fourteen stane o' saumon eaten in the village.'"

As the leader of the church psalmody, occupying a desk (*Scotticé*, letteran) immediately in front of the pulpit, and wearing a gown similar to that of the minister, the precentor is entitled to claim some consideration among the parochial functionaries. The precentor of the High Church of Edinburgh, during

the incumbency of the celebrated Dr Hugh Blair, was sufficiently aware of the value of his services The doctor had one Sabbath been absent from his pulpit, and on the day following, had accidentally encountered his precentor. He inquired of the official how matters had been conducted in church yesterday. "Deed, no very weel, I daur say," was the reply; "I wasna there, doctor, ony mair than yoursel."

The late Rev. Dr Murray of Auchterderran, who, at the period of his death, was Father of the Established Church, conducted his pulpit duties after he had become an octogenarian. The precentor had likewise been long in office, and the insufficiency of his vocal powers had frequently been complained of to the minister. The doctor was reluctant to supersede an official so many years associated with him in his duties; but at length resolved to convey a hint which might induce him to resign. During a week-day conversation with him, the doctor proceeded—"By the way, some o' the folks were remarking that you were scarcely so able for the singing now, and were suggesting"—— Not permitting the minister to conclude the sentence, John broke in—"Ay, ay, sir, that's just what some o' them hae been sayin' to me aboot yersel." "If that be so," said the minister, "they must put up with us both a little longer."

In some parishes, the offices of parochial schoolmaster, session-clerk, and precentor are united in one individual. Such was the arrangement in the parish of Crail towards the close of the last century. The minister of Crail at this period was the eccentric Mr Patrick Glas, already mentioned, and the holder of the inferior pluralities was Mr M'Minn, still remembered in the "east neuk" for his strange ways. A report unfavourable to Mr M'Minn's reputation had been con-

veyed to Mr Glas, who resolved to take notice of it in his discourse on the following Sabbath. His subject was temperance; and in the course of his remarks, the reverend gentleman proceeded—"For you who are sailors, and for ignorant persons, there may be some excuse when you fall into temptation; but I'm grieved to learn that no farther back than last week my own schoolmaster, Maister M'Minn, was seen the worse of drink on the public street." The astonished functionary so assailed started up, and looking towards the pulpit, exclaimed, "It's a great lee ye say, sir." Mr Glas, resenting the interruption, ordered, the church-officer to remove Mr M'Minn from the *letteran*. It was done, and thereafter the service was proceeded with. On the following day, Mr M'Minn threatened legal proceedings against the minister for defaming his character. In the course of inquiry, it was ascertained that the report which had reached Mr Glas was the device of an enemy, and was unfounded. The minister offered reparation, and Mr M'Minn agreed to accept an apology, to be given forth with like publicity as had been the accusation. Accordingly, Mr Glas, at the beginning of the service next Sabbath, stated his regret for what he had, on erroneous information, alleged against Mr M'Minn; and, "in token of his innocence," he added, "I now call on the church-officer to replace him in the letteran." Forthwith the officer obeyed, and duly reinstated the vindicated official in the desk from which he had formerly ejected him.

The Rev. Sir Henry Moncrieff, Bart., was for some years minister of the parish of Blackford, prior to his translation to St Cuthbert's, Edinburgh. During his incumbency at Blackford he had, one Sabbath, opened divine service by giving out a portion of the 71st Psalm, at the seventh verse. In those days (about

1774) each line of the psalm was read aloud by the precentor before being sung; and on this occasion, the conductor of the psalmody followed the usual practice. He enunciated the opening line—

"To many I a wonder am."

The congregation seemed to be overpowered by an inclination to indulge in laughter, which, indeed, some were unable to restrain. The precentor faltered, but proceeded to read the line. This tended only to increase the excitement; and while some quickly withdrew from the church, others concealed their faces under the pews, or buried them in their handkerchiefs. Sir Henry rose up, and, looking down at the precentor, called to him, "So you are a wonder, John; turn your wig." The oddity of the precentor's appearance with his wig misplaced, viewed in connexion with his proclamation, had produced the mistimed merriment.

The precentor of the parish church of St Vigeans came to a pause in the middle of a verse, and quietly exclaiming, "Betsy, woman, you are singing the wrang tune," composedly resumed the tune as if nothing had occurred.

The office of precentor, or *master of the song*, in the Abbey Church of Dunfermline, is one of the most lucrative appointments of the kind in connexion with the Established Church. On the occurrence of a vacancy, there are consequently many candidates. Those best recommended are afforded an opportunity of being heard by the congregation. Late in the last century, on the occasion of a vacancy, a young person connected with the town was voted the privilege of the *letteran*. He accepted the boon; and on the Sabbath assigned him, was found in the desk. On rising to the first psalm, he became suddenly overcome by seeing so many familiar faces intently surveying him; he darted from

the desk, and in a few seconds disappeared. He did not return home; and whither he went, nobody could learn. There were unhappy surmises, but no certain tidings could be learned of the runaway precentor. At the lapse of nearly half a century, when almost all who witnessed the scene had been gathered to their fathers, an elderly gentleman visited the place, and owned himself the hero of the story. He had gone abroad, and become prosperous; he purchased the small estate of Navity, in the neighbourhood, and there erected an elegant mansion.

The beadle or church-officer is the attendant of the minister and the kirk-session. His principal public duty is to carry the church Bible and conduct the minister to the pulpit. There is the story of a beadle who, on appointment, desired the minister specially to remember him "by sayin' a word that he micht be enabled to go out and come in aricht."—A beadle of one of the city churches of Glasgow being asked by an elder from the country whether he could recommend a person to act as a church-officer, replied he could not. "Had you wanted a minister," he added, "I could direct you at once; but where to get one qualified to undertake a beadleship is mair than I ken."

The beadle is, perhaps, the most privileged person in the parish in respect of familiarity with the minister. He is uniformly respectful; but he never hesitates, on suitable occasions, to give the minister a hint or an advice. The Rev. Mr C. of East K. had been officiating at a funeral in his parish. As he was about to return thanks after the service of wine and cake, the beadle whispered in his ear, "Be as dreich* as ye can, for the glasses are frae Glasgow, an' I hae to wash them a' before we lift."†

* Slow. † "Lift" is the *lifting* or removal of the corpse.

The beadle is shrewd, even to a proverb. There is the well-known story—"How is it, John," said the minister, "that you so readily fall asleep when I'm preaching; but when a stranger is in the pulpit, that you keep wide awake?" "Deed, I can soon explain that," replied the functionary. "When you are in the poopit yersel, I ken that it's a' richt; but when a stranger preaches, I like to watch his doctrine a wee."—"Well, John, you were very attentive, I remarked; I hope you were pleased with my preaching," said a young probationer to the beadle who was disrobing him. "It was a' soun'," * said the beadle, emphatically; a criticism which admitted of a twofold interpretation.

A good-natured member of the fraternity used to encourage young preachers, when he saw them at all flurried, by kindly tapping their shoulders with the encouraging words: "Gang awa up, my young man, and you will overcome your feelings. When I at first took up the Bible I was very nervous, but now I feel nowise agitated in the service."

John Ritchie, the beadle of St David's Church, Dundee, was renowned for his peculiar shrewdness and sly humour. A minister in the place, much esteemed for his amiable qualities, one day encountered John, whom he saluted with his customary frankness: "Ah! John, how do you do? It's a long time since we first met. It's forty years, John, since I dined at Balfour, and you served, John. Do you remember?" "I mind quite weel, sir," responded John, "and I mind you were verra merry, sir—verra merry, and ye kept them a' laughin' at ye, sir."—One dark winter evening, Ritchie undertook to conduct the minister of an adjoining parish to the residence of his own pastor in a suburb of the town. It was

* Sound.

particularly dark, and the minister who accompanied John began to express a fear that his guide would miss the way. John, however, continued to assert that all was right, till, after a lengthened journey, they reached the precincts of a large building. Exclaimed the not discomfited functionary, "I've ta'en ye a little aboot, sir; but I thocht ye wad maybe like to see the Cholera Hospital!" The Asiatic scourge was then raging in the town; and John had indeed lost his road.

Alexander M'Lachlan, beadle in the parish of Blairgowrie, had contracted a habit of tippling, which, though it did not wholly unfit him for his duties, had become a matter of considerable scandal. The Rev. Mr Johnstone, the incumbent, had resolved to reprove him on the first suitable opportunity. A meeting of the kirk-session was to be held on a week-day at twelve o'clock. The minister and beadle were in the session-house together before any of the elders had arrived. The beadle was flushed and excited, and the minister deemed the occasion peculiarly fitting for the administration of reproof. "I much fear, Saunders," began the minister, "that the bottle has become ——" "Ay, sir," broke in the unperturbed official, "I was gaun to observe, that there was a smell o' drink amang's!"*—"How is it, John," said a clergyman to his church-officer, "that you never go a message for me anywhere in the parish but you contrive to take too much spirits? People don't offer me spirits when I'm making visits in the parish." "Weel, sir," said John, "I canna precisely explain it, unless on the supposition that I'm a wee mair popular wi' some o' the folks."

A person in Paisley asked one of the beadles in that place as to what remuneration he received from those

* Among us.

members of the congregation who had their children baptized in the church. "Sixpence," replied the functionary, "is the ordinar' thing, but ithers gie a shilling; and them again wha hae a proper notion of the natur' o' baptism, gie me the length o' half-a-crown."

The minister of a pastoral parish in the south was a slow, precise, and pompous man. Though often angry, he never showed haste or impatience. The thunder-cloud settled on his brow, but the thunder was not heard. One Sabbath morning, a dog belonging to one of the shepherds followed his master to church, and when the psalm-singing began, the dog proceeded to howl lustily. This was insufferable. "Carry out that dog, John," said the minister to the beadle. "Carry him out," said John, quite loud; "if I had a piece of a stick, I'll gar him gang oot on his ain feet."

Alexander Methven, the beadle of Dunino, was rather awkward in the performance of any unusual duty. On a sacramental fast-day, a clergyman in the neighbourhood was expected to officiate; but as he did not arrive at the usual hour of worship, the parish minister was under the necessity of commencing the service. The reverend assistant reached the manse soon after, and forthwith despatched the beadle to the church with a message to the minister. The congregation were engaged in prayer as the beadle made his entry; but seemingly unconscious of the fact, he proclaimed aloud from the church passage fronting the pulpit, with his eyes raised towards the minister, the following message: "Mr Wright, sir, has come; he 's been deteened a bit, an' he 's noo i' the manse washin' his hands. He says ye maun gie oot an extra verse, an' he 'll be doun as sune as possible." This proceeding was witnessed by myself.

Though generally well informed, the beadle occasionally trips. A probationer was officiating in the parish church of Kinglassie, with a view to his becoming assistant to the incumbent. "May I ask your name, sir?" said the beadle to him at the close of the service. "I dinna speir't* from ony curiosity o' my ain, but for the *justification* o' the people." Probably he meant the satisfaction or gratification of inquirers.

The Rev. Dr Cook, of Haddington, asked his beadle one morning as to the news. "The Morrisonians, sir, had a meeting last night," said John. "And were ye hearing them, John?" said the doctor. "Ou ay, sir, I was hearing them." "And what did they say, John?" persisted the minister. "They said, sir, that a' things were ordeen'd; and did you ever hear sic nonsense as that?"

In rural parishes, the offices of beadle and sexton are conjoined; but it is otherwise in towns and extensive parochial districts. The sexton is therefore to be regarded as an independent functionary. A little familiarity with his vocation is apt to render him indifferent to the sad nature of his duties. Some years ago, a clergyman, walking in the little churchyard at Alloway, remarked to the gravedigger, who was in the act of making a grave: "Yours is an unpleasant calling, and no doubt your heart is often sore when you are engaged in it." The sexton looked up and promptly replied: "Ay, ay, sir, it's unco sair wark!"—A lady asked the late sexton at Denny, whether he did not feel deeply the duties which his occupation led him to discharge. "Vera much at the first, mem," was the answer; "for the first fortnicht I couldna eat my meat without a knife and fork."

The gravedigger at Sorn, in Ayrshire, was notorious

* Ask it.

for his sordid inclinations; he was constantly in the habit of complaining of his circumstances. Being asked by an acquaintance how the world was using him? he replied, "Puirly—very puirly: the yard has dune naething ava the hale simmer. An' ye like to believe me, I haena buried a leevin' sool these sax weeks."—There is the well-known story of the sexton of Carnwath, who thus equivocally expressed himself on hearing of the death of a parishioner: "Hech whow, I wad rather it had been ither twa!"

On a vacancy in the conjoined offices of beadle and sexton in the small parish of Lecropt, a candidate waited on the Rev. Dr Muir, the incumbent, to learn the extent of the emoluments. The clergyman made some explanations. "An' hoo mony funerals may there be within the coorse o' the year, sir?" inquired the applicant. The minister paused. "Will there be a score, sir, on an average?" persisted the inquirer. "A score of funerals in the year!" exclaimed Dr Muir, with indignation; "you would soon bury the whole parish!"

Though unmoved by contemplating the sad wreck of mortality, the sexton is not otherwise destitute of discretion. The late Rev. James Reid of Kinglassie had an unfortunate temper, and in moments of irritation was apt to violate the apostle's injunction, that a clergyman should be "no striker." He had fixed a quarrel on the parish sexton; one day when that functionary was digging a grave, he was rash enough to strike him with his staff. The gravedigger meekly remarked, "Tak' tent, sir, for an' ye do that again, I may forget that ye're the minister."

Robin Herrick, gravedigger of the dissenting church at Falkirk, exercised his vocation for the period of half a century. He was employed in preparing the grave of a deceased person whom he held in peculiar

esteem. To a gentleman, who happened to pass at the time, he summed up a eulogy on the departed by saying, "He was sic a fine chiel, I'm howkin' his grave wi' a new spade." Herrick was not always disposed to indulge in commendation of the deceased. A gentleman walking in the churchyard observed that the sward on a particular grave was unusually fresh and green. "Ay," replied Robin, "it's a bonnie turf, but it's a pity to see it putten down upon sic a skemp." Dr F——, physician in Dumfries, who was a member of the kirk-session, had severely admonished the parish sexton on account of his habits of intemperance, and threatened, in the event of a continuance of his irregular practices, to expose him. "Ah! doctor," said the gravedigger, with a roguish smile, "I've happit* mony o' your *fauts*,† an' ye maun just sae hide mine."

Robert Fairgrieve, beadle and gravedigger at Ancrum, in Roxburghshire, had returned from Jedburgh fair at an early hour of the afternoon, when he met with the minister. "You've got early back, Robert," said the clergyman. "Ah! sir, we that are the office-bearers should be ensamples to the flock," said the beadle. When Robert was aged and infirm, he was found by a friend in an anxious state of mind. "What's the matter, Robert," was the friend's inquiry. "Ah! I was just minding," says Robert, "that I had buriet 598 folks since I was made bedral o' Ancrum, and I was just anxious that I might be spared to mak' oot the sax hundred."

Blind Alick of Stirling was the most remarkable of Scottish *naturals*.‡ He was blind from his birth; and his intellect, with the exception of one faculty, was an entire blank. That unimpaired faculty was the memory, which was probably unequalled. The voice

* Covered. † Faults. ‡ Imbeciles.

of an individual who had once addressed him, could, in his mind, by no lapse of time, suffer obliteration. He had heard the Scriptures read in the schools, and could repeat almost the entire Sacred Volume, beginning at any chapter or verse; yet no explanation of any passage he might be desired to quote could lead him to comprehend its meaning.

Will Hamilton, the half-wit of Ayr, was hanging about the vicinity of a loch, which was partially frozen. Three young misses were deliberating as to whether they should venture upon the lake's surface, when one of them suggested that Will should be asked to walk on it first. The proposal was made to him. "Though I'm daft, I'm no ill-bred," quickly responded Will. "After you, leddies."

Till lately, a discharged recruit at Stirling, who laboured under the monomania that he had received a charge of the public walks in that burgh, called weekly at the office of one of the local journals to report that "all was right."—"Why dinna ye get married, Jock?" inquired the beadle's wife of the parish simpleton: "They say I'm daft," was the reply, "but I'm no sae daft as to do that.'

CHAPTER II.

PROFESSORS AND STUDENTS.

The Scottish universities have long maintained a high reputation as the sanctuaries of learning. Many of our most distinguished countrymen have been educated at these halls of philosophy and science; while the university chairs have often been occupied by persons of great eminence. There are many anecdotes of professorial eccentricity; but we know of none reflecting upon the capabilities or professional qualifications of individual professors.

What is commonly termed absence of mind has never been considered incompatible with the presence of a vigorous intellect. The late distinguished mathematician, Professor Hamilton of Aberdeen, was notorious for his absence of mind. Emerging hastily one day from the arched gateway at King's College, he stumbled against a cow, which chanced to be passing. In the confusion of the moment, the professor raised his hat, exclaiming, "I beg your pardon, madam!" Walking in Union Street, a few days afterwards, he did incidentally stumble against a lady who was walking in an opposite direction. In sudden recollection of his former adventure, he called out, "Is that you again, you brute!"

A late humorous professor in St Andrews used to relate the following anecdote at his own expense:—When

minister of a country parish, he had the misfortune to lose a number of his teeth, and he had become apprehensive lest he should be deprived of the others. While he was preaching one Sabbath, he had observed the precentor scratch his head, a circumstance which led him to fear that another emancipated tooth had fallen upon the pate of that functionary. His dinner in the afternoon consisted of sheep's head and trotters boiled in broth. Of the broth he had tasted only a few spoonfuls when he discovered two teeth in his plate. "Fully satisfied now," said the professor, "that I had been spitting teeth, I despatched John for the medical man. He lived four miles off; but John representing the case as urgent, he was at the manse in a few hours. 'Can you fasten teeth, doctor,' I said to the physician, 'for mine are falling out of my head in pairs.' 'Show me any you have lost,' said the physician. I immediately unfolded, from a bit of silk paper, the teeth which I had found in my plate, and begged to be informed whether they could be restored to the jaw. 'These are sheep's teeth,' said the doctor. I was freed from all further uneasiness," concluded the professor.—The same professor, being a zealous promoter of education, was frequently visited by the schoolmasters of the neighbourhood. On one occasion he was waited on by Mr Espline, schoolmaster of Monimail, a leading person in his profession. "How do you schoolmasters employ yourselves on Saturday, which you keep, I believe, as a weekly holiday?" inquired the professor. "Why," replied Mr Espline, "we often visit each other's houses; and, after having a glass together, we occasionally read an essay to one another." "And I suppose," added the witty professor, "*Esse* has the same case after it as it has before it."

"A professor in the University of Glasgow, as eminent for talent as for temper," writes Sheriff Barclay, "was often annoyed by his unruly students. One day, when the sun shone brightly into the room, a wild Irish boy, with a piece of glass, contrived to dazzle and confuse the worthy preceptor, by reflecting the rays of the sun full on his face. At length, the Professor caught young Ireland, red-hand, in the act. All the class looked for instant expulsion. But the venerable man gaily said, 'Young man, depend upon it the *reflection* is on you, not on me.'" The sunbeams were ever after permitted to follow their natural course.

The late Professor Duncan, of St Andrews, was, prior to his appointment to his chair, rector of an academy in Forfarshire. He was particularly reserved in his intercourse with the fair sex; but, in prospect of obtaining a professorship, he ventured to make proposals to a lady. They were walking together, and the important question was put without preliminary sentiment or note of warning. Of course, the lady replied by a gentle "No!" The subject was immediately dropped; but the parties soon met again. "Do you remember," at length said the lady, "a question you put to me when we last met?" The professor said that he remembered. "And do you remember my answer, Mr Duncan?" "Oh! yes," said the professor. "Well, Mr Duncan," proceeded the lady, "I have been led, on consideration, to change my mind." "And so have I," drily responded the professor. He maintained his bachelorship to the close.

Professor Duncan was dining with another professor of the same college. The professor's wife and his friends rallied him on his bachelorship, and handing to him a drawing-room volume containing the heads of some beautiful ladies, asked what he thought of them?

Mr Duncan good-naturedly criticised their various points, and showed a keen appreciation of female beauty. "Why then," said one of the ladies, "don't you take one of these to your home?" "They are a' best on paper," was the professor's unperturbed but ungallant reply.

The wife of a professor in an ancient university, who died a few years ago, when she was a nonogenarian, carried to her death-bed a peculiar turn for quaint and pithy sayings, for which she had been long reputed. One of her sons-in-law was in the habit of attending all funerals to which he was invited. Referring to the arrangements for her funeral, the old lady quaintly added, "It will be a grand ploy* for Mr S."

Learned professors have occasionally been outwitted by the sayings of the simple. Dr Hill, an Edinburgh professor of the last century, met in the suburbs of the city an inoffensive creature who was generally regarded as an imbecile. Somewhat irritated by the creature's intrusion on the privacy of his walk, the Professor said to him, "How long, Tom, may one live without brains?" "I diuna ken," said Tom; "how long hae ye lived yersel?"

A theological student, supposed to be somewhat deficient in judgment, was, in the course of a class examination, asked by a professor, "Pray, Mr E——, how would you discover a fool?" "By the questions he would put," said Mr E——.

A student, breakfasting with Professor Hill, was repeatedly urged by his kind entertainer to finish his egg. At length the young gentleman simply explained, that he had "eaten it a' but the bird." The egg had contained a young chicken.

A theological student, who was a source of great

* Amusement.

merriment to his class-mates, on account of a certain demureness of manners, had been pelted by them with their books in one of the class-rooms. Next morning, the sufferer chanced to be breakfasting with Professor Buist, along with some of the offenders. He deemed the occasion suitable to prefer his complaint. "Would you believe it, doctor, some of them even pelt me with their books. Is it not very bad?" "Very bad for the books," drily replied the professor.

A Highland student, attending the Humanity Class in the University of Aberdeen, thus rendered the first sentence of CÆSAR'S "Commentaries," *Gallia est omnis divisa in tres partes*;—"All Gaul is *quartered* into three *halves*."

CHAPTER III.

THE BENCH AND THE BAR.

THE Scottish supreme judicatory in civil causes is the Court of Session, which holds its sittings at Edinburgh. It consists of thirteen judges, who are entitled to be addressed as Lords. They do not necessarily connect their titles with their family names, but are privileged to assume any designation which is agreeable to them.

A professional brother, Mr Maconochie, informing the facetious advocate, John Clerk, that he had the prospect of being raised to the Bench, asked him to suggest what title he should adopt. "Lord Preserve us!" said Clerk. In pleading before the same learned senator, who assumed the judicial title of Lord Meadowbank, it was remarked to Clerk by his lordship, that in the legal document which he had submitted to the court, he might have varied the frequently-occurring expression "as also" to *likewise*. "No, my lord," said Clerk, "there's a difference; your lordship's father was Lord Meadowbank, and you are also Lord Meadowbank, but you are not *likewise*."

Of the thirteen members of the Supreme Court, the five junior judges are termed Lords Ordinary, while the others are separated into two divisions, which together constitute what is termed the Inner House. A young advocate, in pleading before a division of

the Inner House, had unwittingly expressed his "surprise and indignation" at the judgment of the Court. To ward off the rebuke of their lordships, Mr Clerk rose to the relief of his friend, and assured the court that no disrespect was intended by the expressions of his learned brother. He added, as a peroration, "Had my learned friend as long experience of your lordships as I have had, he would not have been surprised at anything."

The presidents of the First and Second Divisions of the Inner House enjoy respectively the designations of Lord Justice-General and Lord Justice-Clerk. A late Lord Justice-Clerk, who had a residence in the country, had, in the shooting season, proceeded beyond his boundaries in quest of game. He was rudely challenged by the tenant, who called on him forthwith to quit his grounds. "Do you know, sir," said the learned judge, "whom you are speaking to? I am the Lord Justice-Clerk." "I dinna care," rejoined the clodhopper, "whase clerk ye are; I wadna let the Shirra-Clerk trespass on my farm."

Lord Justice-Clerk Braxfield was a man of few words and strong business habits. In courting his second wife, his procedure was entirely illustrative of the peculiarities of his character. Calling for the lady, he said to her, without preliminary remark, "Lizzy, I am looking out for a wife, and I thought you just the person that would suit me. Let me have your answer, off or on, the morn, and nae mair about it." The lady next day replied in the affirmative.

Lord Braxfield's butler came to give up his place because he could not bear his lady's continual scolding. "Man!" Braxfield exclaimed, "ye 've little to complain o'; ye may be thankfu' ye 're no married to her."

The first Lord Meadowbank mysteriously disap-

peared on the evening of his marriage, and, when searched for, was found busily engaged in the composition of a metaphysical essay "on pains and penalties."

Lord Eskgrove had to condemn two or three persons to death for breaking into Sir James Colquhoun's house at Luss, assaulting him and others, and robbing them of a large sum of money. He reminded them that they attacked the house and the persons within it, robbed and beat them, and then came to this climax, "All this you did, and, preserve us! joost when they were sittin' doun to their denner."

Lord Monboddo was offered the appointment of a Justiciary Judge. His lordship, who was devoted to farming, quaintly declined the offer with the characteristic remark, "No, I have more pleasure in looking after my little farm during the vacation of the Court of Session than I should have in running about the country hanging people."

Sir William Nairn, Bart., a Lord of Session by the title of his estate of Dunsinane, was frugal to the extent of penuriousness. In his country house at Dunsinane he had only one bed, that he might avoid the expense of entertaining visitors. Mr George Dempster of Dunnichen, one of his few friends, was visiting him at Dunsinane, when a severe storm arose, which determined him to remain all night. Every hint to induce his guest to take his departure proving ineffectual, he said, "George, if you *will* stay, you must go to bed at ten and rise at three, and then I shall get the bed after you."

For the two following we are indebted to Sheriff Barclay:—"The late Lord Robertson being retained with a large fee as counsel in a heavy jury trial at Glasgow, an agent in Edinburgh, who had a minor

case at the same sittings, enclosed to the humorous counsel a corresponding small fee, apologising for the smallness by stating that he heard the learned counsel was going to Glasgow "at any rate." The characteristic reply was that the agent was misinformed as to his going to Glasgow "at any rate," as it was at the rate of £500. Nevertheless, with his wonted kind-heartedness, he accepted the lesser fee, and nobly earned it.

Lord Cringletie was the first judge who gave reasons in support of his decisions in copious notes. Previous to his time the decisions of the Judges in the Outer House were quite oracular. The talismanic word "decern," or "assoilzie," were all the indication of the cause being studied. His lordship was much twitted with the innovation. He acquired the name of the *noted* Lord Cringletie, and the well-known distich was oft repeated, however unfounded the assertion—

> "Cringletie and Necessity tally to a tittle,
> Necessity has no law, and Cringletie has as little."

So attentive was his lordship to his duties, that it is recorded that a huge process, of some quarter of a century, having been sent him, for the simple purpose of subscribing the formal interlocutor of wakening* by consent of parties, he had read the whole process, and when the interlocutor was returned subscribed, it had the following appropriate *Note*:—"The Lord Ordinary has read the process, and he would remind the pursuers of the adage, 'Let sleeping dogs lie.'" The hint was taken.

The following anecdote, illustrative of the niggardliness of the celebrated Lord Chancellor Erskine, was told by the late Samuel Rogers:—To all letters soliciting his subscription to anything, Erskine had a regular form of reply, viz., 'Sir, I feel much honoured

* A Scottish legal phrase.

by your application to me, and I beg to subscribe'—here the reader had to turn over the leaf—'myself your very obedient servant.'"

It is a vulgar notion that those who, from their official position, are called on to administer justice, are destitute of feeling. The following anecdotes serve to prove the reverse. The distinguished Sir David Dalrymple, subsequently Lord Hailes, was attending the Circuit Court at Stirling, in the capacity of Advocate Depute, or prosecutor. On the first day of the court, he was in no haste to bring on the proceedings. A brother advocate asked him, "Why was there no trial this forenoon?" "There are," replied Dalrymple, "some persons to be tried for their lives, and, therefore, it is proper they should have time to confer with their counsel." "That's of no consequence," said the other. "Last year I came to visit Lord Kames, when he was here on the circuit, and he appointed me counsel for a man who was accused of a capital offence. Though I had very little time to prepare, yet I made a very decent speech." "And was your client acquitted?" "Oh! most unjustly condemned," said the other. "That, sir," said Sir David, "is no good reason for hurrying trials."—The late Lord Jeffrey had advertised for a gardener at Craigcrook, specifying that he desired to have one without encumbrance. A candidate appeared who confessed that he had a family of nine children. His lordship intimated his satisfaction with the applicant's recommendations, but stated the fact of his numerous household being an insuperable barrier to his appointment. "I would," said the judge, "constantly be hearing of hooping-cough, &c., and that would never suit." "Weel, weel, my lord," said the gardener, "thae puir weans!* that's the third situation they ha'e lost me." Melted by the

* Children.

speech, Jeffrey said, feelingly, "I 'll take you and your weans."

The Bar has long been celebrated as an arena of humour. Mr Jeffrey, in addressing a jury, was speaking freely of a military officer who had been a witness in the cause. Having frequently described him as "this soldier," the officer, who was present, could not restrain himself, but started up, calling out, "Don't call me a soldier, sir; I am an officer." "Well, gentlemen," proceeded Mr Jeffrey, "this officer, who is no soldier, was the sole cause of the whole disturbance."—In an action for libel before the jury court, in which the incorporated fleshers of Dumfries accused a bailie of that burgh for denouncing them as "a pack of swindlers," Jeffrey admitted that his client had used language very like that which had been attributed to him, and which, he averred, was, though not in any degree libellous, somewhat discourteous and incorrect. The pursuers did not carry on a traffic in pigs, but in the carcases of sheep and cattle; and, hence, to say that they dealt in swine was scarcely true. But he submitted that the epithet, a pack of swine dealers, was a very different thing from a pack of swindlers, and he trusted, therefore, that the jury would honourably acquit the defendant of all intention to libel the fleshers' corporation. The jury at once returned a verdict of acquittal.—Sheriff Logan enjoyed the distinction of being one of the most facetious counsel at the Scottish Bar. He was counsel for a poor widow in a process with a party who had succeeded to her husband's business. There was much confusion in the case, which pressed heavily upon the widow. The Lord Ordinary recommended that parties should "feel each other's pulses." Mr Logan, looking earnestly at the presiding judge, exclaimed, "Where there is no heart, there can be no pulse, my lord."

Apart from forensic humour, several members of the Scottish Bar have obtained celebrity for their witticisms in private life. John Clerk, who had a halt in his gait, overheard a lady remark to a friend, "That's Mr Clerk, the lame lawyer." Mr Clerk, who was passing along the street, turned round, and addressing the lady said, "No, madam, I am a lame man, but not a lame lawyer."—On being raised to the Bench, Mr Clerk took the title of Lord Eldin, from his family estate. Some one remarked to him that his title nearly resembled that of the Lord Chancellor Eldon; to which he replied, "The difference between us is in my eye (*i*)."

The Hon. Henry Erskine was remarkable for ready humour and repartee. Meeting in London the celebrated Duchess of Gordon, he said to her, "Are we never again to enjoy the honour of your Grace's society in Edinburgh?" "Oh, Edinburgh is a vile dull place; I hate it," responded the Duchess. "Madam," said Erskine, "The sun might as well say, there's a vile dark morning; I won't rise to-day."—A late Earl of Kelly was relating in a company, that he had listened to a sermon in Italy, in which the preacher described the alleged miracle of St Anthony preaching to the fishes, which, in order to listen to him, held their heads out of the water. "I can believe the miracle," said Erskine, "if your lordship was at church." "I was certainly there," said the peer. "Then," rejoined Henry, "there was at least one fish out of the water."

On a change of ministry, Erskine was appointed to succeed Harry Dundas (subsequently Lord Melville) as Lord Advocate. On the morning of his appointment, he met Mr Dundas in the Parliament House, who had resumed the ordinary gown worn by all practitioners at the Scottish Bar, excepting the Lord Advocate and Solicitor-General. After a little con-

versation, Erskine remarked that he must be off to order his silk gown. "'Tis not worth your while," said Dundas, "for the short time you 'll want it; you had better borrow mine." "I have no doubt your gown," replied Erskine, "is made to *fit any party;* but, however short may be my time in office, it shall not be said of Henry Erskine that he put on the *abandoned habits* of his predecessor."

Lord Kames was presiding at a Justiciary dinner at Perth, at which Erskine was present. His lordship, who was careful of his money, had not produced the usual quantity of claret. The conversation turned on Sir Charles Hardy's fleet, which was then blockaded by the French. "They 'dre," said Erskine, "like us, confined to port."—Erskine sent two of his sons to a private school in Edinburgh, which was lighted from the roof. At a public examination of the school, Erskine observed some drops of rain falling on the floor in consequence of a broken pane—on which he remarked to the teacher, "I perceive, sir, you spare no *panes* on your scholars."

A judge of the Commissary Court talked in an inflated and pompous manner. Having failed to attend an appointment with Erskine, he subsequently explained that he had been called out of town owing to his brother, in the country, having, in attempting to leap a fence, fallen from a stile, and sprained his foot. "It was fortunate for your brother," said the wit, "that it was not from your style he fell, or he had certainly broken his neck." — Shortly after the death of Mr John Wright, a talented but unsuccessful advocate, the late Sheriff Anstruther remarked to Erskine on the street, "Poor Wright is dead. He has died very poor. It is said he has

left no effects." "That is not wonderful," replied the humorist; "as he had no *causes* he could have no *effects*."

Mr Erskine of Alva, subsequently Lord Bargaig, was a person of very short stature. Having been counsel in a case in which Henry Erskine appeared on the opposite side, he was obliged, on account of the crowded state of the court, to have a chair brought forward on which to raise himself while addressing the judge. "This," remarked Henry Erskine, "is one way of rising at the bar."

Erskine was indifferent to the rules of pronunciation. In pleading before a learned senator he spoke of a *curātor bonis*. "Allow me to correct you," said his lordship, "the word is curātor." "Thank you, my lord," said Erskine, "I don't doubt your lordship is right since you are so learned a senātor and so eloquent an orātor."

Erskine and Mr Adam, afterwards Lord Gillon, agreed to tease Lord Newton by punning, which he had a great aversion to. They were all dining together at a friend's house, when Erskine proposed the following questions to a lady about to proceed to London. "So, Miss Eliza, you are going to London, I hear?" "Yes," responded the lady. "Do you expect to see many great people there?" persisted Mr Erskine. "Oh certainly," rejoined the lady. "Where do you think there will be most lords, whether at the east or west end of town?" "Of course at the west end, Mr Erskine," said the lady. "No, you are wrong—at the east end there is a Lord 'mair.'"* Lord Newton rose instantly from the table, and making his way to the door, exclaimed, "Did ever anybody hear such a parcel of fools?"

* Mayor.

The following epigram by Erskine is believed to be now for the first time published :—

> The French have taste in all they do,
> While we are quite without,
> For nature which to them gave *goût*,
> To us gave only gout.

Hugh Arnot, the ingenious author of the "History of Edinburgh," was a member of the Bar, and was justly renowned for his facetiousness. Arnot happened to meet Dr John Hill, Professor of Humanity in the University, on his return from witnessing the execution of three convicts in the Grassmarket. "What!" he exclaimed, "seeing the execution, and you a Professor of Humanity!"—Though unsound in his religious opinions, Arnot had a strong sense of honour, and accordingly, was in the habit of declining all causes which did not appear founded in law and justice. Having refused a case put into his hands by an intending litigant, he said to the individual, "Pray, sir, what do you suppose me to be?" "A lawyer," replied the other. "I thought," rejoined Arnot, "that you had taken me for a scoundrel."

The formal character of the proceedings of the Supreme Court precludes the idea of humour on the part of the bench. The following exception occurred lately. There was an action of aliment at the instance of a wife who was living apart from her husband. The husband had been a shoemaker, but had succeeded to a fortune of £18,000; and on account of the change in his circumstances, the wife claimed more liberal maintenance. The counsel for the defender stated that in some previous actions for divorce his client was subjected to an expense of £3000. "How," said Lord Deas, "would the shoemaker have got justice if

he had been obliged to stick to his last?" The Lord President promptly rejoined, "He would have required to spend his *awl*."

Scottish juries are generally intelligent, but individual jurors not always so. At an assize held in Jedburgh, the jury were, on retiring, anxiously engaged in deliberating on the evidence respecting the guilt of an alleged criminal. The jury were generally of opinion that the case was proven, when one of the jurors, a country farmer, insisted that "a' the other witnesses were completely upset by the last ane." The *last one* was no other than the prisoner's counsel.

The more ordinary legal business of the country is conducted by the county and district Sheriffs. The late Sir John Hay, Bart., Sheriff-substitute of Stirlingshire, was one of the most facetious members of his order. He had fallen into the habit of *crooning*, or whistling in an under-tone, some of the more popular Scottish airs. A youthful panel was, in his court, found guilty of an act of larceny. After pronouncing a sentence of imprisonment, Sir John added, "Take care you don't come here again, or——," he closed the sentence by humming the tune, "Owre the water to Charlie." The hint was no doubt understood.

Legal practitioners in the provincial towns, who conduct pleadings before the Sheriff and other local courts, are designated Writers or Procurators. One of the most amusing anecdotes in connexion with this body is the following:—About the beginning of the century, two sheep-farmers on the Braes of Balquidder had disputed regarding a matter of boundary, and resolved to have recourse to the law. Unknown to each other they both proceeded to Dunblane, the seat of the district Sheriff, with the view of employing a lawyer of whose expertness in his profession they had heard a

good report. The lawyer undertook the case of the first who presented himself; but shortly after, the other intending litigant waited upon him to claim his services. Explaining how he stood, the lawyer added, that all he could do was to give him a letter of introduction to a brother of his craft. The farmer was most grateful, accepted the note, and proceeded to the residence of the other practitioner. He was from home, and not to return till the following morning. The farmer resolved to remain for the night, and, in the course of a solitary evening at the hotel, proceeded to gratify his curiosity by opening the note addressed to the proposed supporter of his cause. He read as follows!—

> "Twa fat sheep frae the Braes o' Balquidder—
> Fleece you the ae sheep, I'll fleece the ither."

The farmer was dumfoundered. He left the hotel at dawn, and hastened to the abode of his antagonist. They were not *fleeced!*

CHAPTER IV.

CIVIC DIGNITARIES AND MUNICIPAL PRACTICES.

THE chief magistrate of the Scottish burgh is designated the Provost, a title corresponding with that of the English Mayor. In the cities and more important burghs, the provost is generally a man of substance and consideration; but in the lesser towns, an aptitude for public speaking, or some other incidental quality, has recommended persons, otherwise unqualified, to the first municipal office. There is the well-known story of James VI., in which he jocularly referred to the *dignity* and *munificence* of the Scottish provost. In the course of his progress from Scotland to London to occupy the English throne, James was sumptuously entertained by the mayor of an English town, who kept open house for several days in honour of his Majesty's visit. It was hinted to the king by an English courtier that such liberal hospitality would be uncommon among the civic authorities in the northern portion of his dominions. "Tuts, man," said the king, "the provost o' my little toun o' Forfar keeps open hoose a' the year roun', and aye the mair that come the welcomer." The provost of Forfar kept a change-house.—On another occasion when some one was speaking of the unimportance of the Scottish burghs, the monarch stated that "there was a toun in Scotland, that o' Nairn, of such extent that the inhabitants spoke two different languages, and the folks o' ae end couldna understand the folks at the ither." The king

wittily alluded to the fact that the Scottish and Gaelic languages were both spoken in the northern burgh.

The civic chief of Forfar in the eighteenth century occupied a social position not more elevated than his change-house-keeping predecessor. A gentleman from a distant part of the country had visited Forfar to make some statistical or other inquiries regarding the burgh. On entering the place, he asked of a plain individual, bending under a load of timber, whether he knew if the provost was at home. "It's I that bear the burden," responded the person addressed. "I know you do," said the stranger, supposing that his question had been misunderstood; "but I ask you if you know whether the provost is at home." "I 'm provost o' Forfar," said the man with the load, who, laying down his burden, listened to the narrative of the stranger's wishes.

In the discharge of his magisterial duty, a provost of Lochmaben had fined a stormy woman for being drunk and disorderly. The penalty, amounting to seven shillings and sixpence, was promptly paid. In the course of the afternoon the provost called at the shop of the village cobbler, and in an excited manner exclaimed, "Oh now I 'm juist real mad* at our fiscal and town clerk, that am I. What d'ye think they've gane an' dune? They've drunk a' Tibby Johnstone's fine, that have they, an' nevir offered me a glass o' yill—did they nae."

Late in last century, the servant of a candidate for parliamentary honours waited on the provost of Lochmaben with a letter from his master soliciting the provost's support. The magistrate, on opening the letter, held the document by the wrong end. The servant ventured to notice the fact. "What!" said the indignant magistrate, "d' ye think I wad be fit to be provost o' Lochmaben gin' I couldna read a letter at ony end!"

* Very angry.

A late chief magistrate of Lochmaben conducted business as a hotel-keeper in the place. On particular occasions, such as when the farmers dined together in his house, he assisted in serving. Strangers were, of course, amused to find the familiarity with which the untutored husbandmen vociferated, "Provost, anither potawto."

One fine summer day, some thirty years ago, the schoolmaster of a country parish, meeting the provost of Dunfermline, about the hour of noon, remarked somewhat pedantically in passing, "A delicious day, provost; the sun is now about meridian." The provost assented. Meeting some friends that evening, the civic chief hailed them—"We have had a most malicious day, gentlemen; the sun is just noo aboot the Mediterrawnean."

The provost of an important burgh happening to be in Paris, had the honour to receive an invitation to dine with Louis Philippe. The king made himself quite familiar with the Scottish magistrate; and ascertaining that he prosecuted the business of a bookseller, conducted him into the royal library. "You will observe," said the king, "I am well supplied with English literature. There's a fine edition of Burke." "Ah, the villain," said the magistrate, "I was present when he was hanged." The provost thought of Burke the murderer.

When George IV. visited Scotland in 1822, the town council of Dundee deemed it a dutiful act of loyalty to the sovereign to send a deputation to the capital, there to pay court and be presented to the king. In order that the town might be suitably represented at court, the deputation, which consisted of the provost and one of the bailies, along with an ex-provost—were provided with a carriage and four at

the town's expense. The carriage was brushed up for the occasion, got the town's arms painted on the pannels of the doors, and the box decorated with a hammercloth. The deputation were also provided with silk gowns and cocked hats. On the return of the deputation, a discussion arose in the council as to the disposal of the paraphernalia, when the Provost gravely proposed that the hammercloth should be preserved as a *memento mori* of the king's visit.

A late provost of Bathgate, in presenting the parochial clergyman with a piece of plate, subscribed for by the parishioners, concluded his address to the reverend recipient in these words—"I may only add, sir, that you're a soundin' brass, and a tinklin' cymbal."

A late provost of Montrose had an ornamental lamp, emblazoned with the arms of the burgh, erected at the public expense, opposite the entrance to his house. His provostship having soon after expired, a humorist, who was unfavourable to the provost's re-investment in his civic dignities, circulated a handbill with the following incription—"The Lamp's out." The announcement was an extinguisher. The ex-civic chief was not re-elected to the council, and his successors in office, fearing lest they should be snuffed out in like manner, refused to make use of the lamp at their dwellings. The lamp is now permanently affixed at the entrance to the Town-House.

The magistrates associated with the provost in the administrative duties of the municipality are termed Bailies—these officials corresponding with the aldermen of the south. The bailies hold daily courts for the trial of persons charged with petty offences. A bailie of the Gorbals, Glasgow, was noted for the simplicity of his manners on the bench. A youth was charged before his tribunal with abstracting a handkerchief from

a gentleman's pocket. The indictment having been read, the bailie, addressing the prisoner, remarked, "I hae nae doot ye did the deed, for I had a handkerchief ta'en oot o' my ain pouch* this vera week."

The same magisterial logician was on another occasion seated on the bench, when a case of serious assault was brought forward by the public prosecutor. Struck by the powerful phraseology of the indictment, the bailie proceeded to say, "For this malicious crime, you are fined half a guinea." The assessor remarked that the case had not yet been proven. "Then," said the magistrate, "we'll just mak the fine five shillings."

A few years ago an Edinburgh magistrate, in giving judgment in a police case, said to the panel, "The evidence is a wee jimp,† so I'll let ye aff this time, but tak care ye are no found in the same scrape again."—Bailie Robertson of the Canongate had not the advantage of an early education. A case was brought before him, in which the owner of a squirrel presented a claim of damages against a person who had it in charge, but who had allowed it to escape. From the complications of the case, the bailie was rather at a loss. At length, collecting his faculties, he said to the defendant, "Did ye clip its wings?" "It's a quadruped, yer honour," said the defendant. "Quadruped here, quadruped there," said the magistrate, "if ye had clipped its wings, it couldna hae flown aff. I maun decide against ye."

One of the magistrates of Paisley, who was much disconcerted and alarmed by the many commercial failures which were occurring at the time, was one evening in 1857, met by a friend who had just arrived from the telegraph office. "Delhi is down," exclaimed the friend. "Is it possible!" said the bailie; "it's a big firm; are there mony o' oor town's folk in wi't?"

The late Bailie A——n of Glasgow, heard, when a

* Pocket. † "Wee jimp," rather slender.

young man, Lord Justice-General Boyle pass sentence of death on a criminal convicted of murder. On attaining the magisterial office, he conceived he could not have a better model of deportment than that of this eminent judge. A boy having been brought before him for stealing a turnip, he sentenced him to seven days' imprisonment, adding, "May the Lord have mercy on your soul."

The same magisterial personage was one day walking along the public thoroughfare in the vicinity of the city, when a woman in pursuit of her cow called out to him, "Man, stop my coo." "Woman," indignantly exclaimed the bailie, "I'm no a man, I'm a magistrate o' Glasgow."—The bailie had some parties brought before him for causing a noise in one of the streets. His decision was that "they should be reprimanded till the morning;" he meant *remanded.*

"That's a sad affair," remarked a townsman to a bailie in a western burgh; "Willie Gow has committed suicide." "Wha on?" asked the magistrate.—A bailie of the Scottish capital had been on a visit to London, and on his return, expatiated to a friend on the courtesy and attention which he had experienced from one of the city members. Describing how the M.P. had procured free access for him to many of the public institutions, he reached the climax of eulogy by saying, "Why, sir, he got me a *blank cartridge* for every place in London." Probably the magistrate meant a *carte blanche.*

A bailie of Cupar-Fife was possessed of considerably more shrewdness than those we have enumerated. Two boys were brought before him charged with trespass within the enclosures of Craufurd Priory. The prosecutor was the factor of the late eccentric Lady Mary Lindsay Craufurd. The bailie having ascertained that one of the youths was a drummer from Edinburgh

Castle, and that the other belonged to a guard-ship at Leith, gave each a shilling, and told them to go home—one to his castle, and the other to his cabin. "And now," said the magistrate, addressing the factor, "you may tell Lady Mary that I have sent one of the delinquents aboard a man-o'-war, and the other to be a sodger."

A Dundee magistrate, of penurious habits, was rallied by a friend on the shabbiness of his attire. "Hoots, man," said the bailie, "it's nae matter; everybody kens me here." The same friend afterwards met him in London, when his dress was equally exceptionable. "As plain as ever, bailie!" was the salutation. "Hoots, man," was the magistrate's ready response, "naebody kens me here."

The treasurer or chamberlain is intrusted with the custody of the burgh funds, and is responsible for their proper application. The possession of opulence is a strong recommendation for the treasurership. A shoemaker in Stirling, who, from humble circumstances, had elevated himself to a prosperous position, was appointed treasurer or chamberlain of that burgh. Owing to defective training, he was as ignorant of account-keeping as he was unfamiliar with the use of the pen. But native ingenuity came to his aid. Dispensing altogether with the ordinary ledger, he suspended a pair of old boots on each side of his parlour chimney, into one of which he deposited the amount of his receipts, while the other was the receptacle of his vouchers of disbursement. The boots were found a satisfactory substitute for the *books* usually employed by burgh chamberlains.

It is the practice of municipal corporations to present a gratis burgess-ticket, or, in other words, to grant the freedom of the burgh, to those individuals who have sought to advance the interests of the place,

or who have distinguished themselves in conducting the public affairs. Personages of the highest rank have accepted of these municipal distinctions. Some public ceremonial usually attends the bestowal of the burgess-ticket. It was formerly the practice of the burgh corporation of Selkirk to provide a collation or *déjeûner* on the initiation of a burgess. The rite of initiation consisted in the newly-accepted brother passing through his mouth a bunch of bristles which had previously been mouthed by all the members of the Board. This practice was termed "licking the birse;" it took its origin at a period when shoemaking was the staple trade of the place, the birse being the emblem of that craft. When Sir Walter Scott was made a burgess or "sutor of Selkirk," he took the precaution, before mouthing the beslabbered brush to wash it in his wine; but this act of rebellion was punished by his being compelled to drink the polluted liquor. This unrefined burghal habit continued till 1819, when Prince Leopold was created "a sutor" of Selkirk.

At a former period, municipal honours were occasionally bestowed for the performance of acts, which, in these more enlightened times, would be reprehended. In his "Memorials of Angus and Mearns," Mr Jervise records how that, in 1661, the town council of Forfar approved "of the 'care and diligence' of Alexander Heigh, a dealer in 'aquavitie,' (from whom, as appears in evidence, much of the liquor was got that 'the devil' gave to the unfortunate dupes whom he met periodically in the churchyard,) for his bringing over John Rinked, for trying of the prisoners suspect of witchcraft." "Nay, so exceedingly well pleased," adds Mr Jervise, "were the council with the manner in which Rinked performed his disgusting business, that within ten days after Keith of Caldame, Sheriff-

Depute of the county of Forfar, and a cadet of the noble family of Keith Marischal, had been admitted a burgess and freeman of the burgh, the same honour was conferred by the magistrates upon 'John Rinked, pricker of the witches in Trennent!'" A deputation of the town council of Forfar was, at another time, appointed to speak with David Soutar to undertake the office of "scourger of the poore."

There are various municipal practices of a peculiar description, which continue to be observed in some of the minor burghs. The *riding of the marches* is well known. On the birthday of the sovereign, or on some other interesting anniversary, the magistrates and council assemble at the cross. The health of the sovereign is drunk with royal honours, and a procession is formed. The magistrates and the town-council, with their officials, precede, seated in carriages; the burgesses follow on horseback; and a crowd of men, women, and children, make up the rear.

Mr David Ure, in his history of the ancient royal burgh of Rutherglen, thus describes the practice of *riding the marches*, as practised in that place:—"The magistrates, with a considerable number of the council and inhabitants, assemble at the cross, from which they proceed in martial order, with drums beating, &c.; and, in that manner, go round the boundaries of the royalty, to see if any encroachments have been made on them. These boundaries are distinguished by march-stones, set up at small distances from each other. In some places there are two rows, about seven feet distant. The stones are shaped at the top, somewhat resembling a man's head; but the lower part is square. This peculiar form was originally intended to represent the god Terminus, of whom there are so many rude images. Every new burgess comes

under an obligation to provide a march-stone at his own expense, and to cut upon it the initials of his name, and the year in which it was set up."

"It has been a custom," adds Mr Ure, "time out of memory, for the riders of the marches to deck their hats, drums, &c., with broom; and to combat with one another at the newly-erected stone, out of respect, perhaps, to the deity whose image they had set up, or that they might the better remember the precise direction of the boundary at that place. This part of the exercise is now postponed till the survey is over, and the company have returned to the cross, where, having previously provided themselves with broom bushes, they exhibit a mock engagement, and fight, seemingly with great fury, till their weapons fail them, when they part in good friendship; and, frequently, not until they have testified their affection over a flowing bumper. They ride the marches at least once in two years."

At Linlithgow, on the occasion of the riding of the marches, the farm-servants of the neighbourhood join the procession, mounted on their farm horses, and having their bonnets decorated with ribbons, understood to be gifted by their sweethearts. The procession continues for several miles, and returns to the burgh by a different route. The afternoon is spent in festivity. This practice was originated at a period when it was deemed essential to secure the inviolability of the burgh lands by an annual examination of the boundary stones; but the observance has continued when the lands have been alienated, or when the actual examination of the fences has been discontinued.

At Jedburgh, Melrose, and some other Border towns, the day on which *Fastern's E'en** occurs is observed as a holiday—the places of business are closed and the

* Shrove Tuesday.

younger members of the population ardently engage in the sport of the football. At Culross, a small burgh on the northern bank of the Forth, the first day of July was formerly observed by the burgesses, in honour of St Serf or Servanus, the titular saint of the place.

There are annual rejoicings at the royal burgh of Queensferry early in August, in memorial of the crossing of the Forth at that point by the saintly Queen Margaret. On the day preceding that of the principal *saturnalia*, there is the procession of the *Buryman*. A lad or upgrown person is enveloped in a loose flannel robe, to which are attached the adhesive burrs of the burr-thistle; he is then elevated on two staves, which are decorated with flowers, and so arrayed and mounted, he is led in procession from door to door. The gratuities supplied to the Buryman and his attendants are expended in subsequent festivities.

The following is from Mr Ure's History of Rutherglen:—"Another ancient custom, for the observance of which Rutherglen has long been famous, is the baking of four cakes. Some peculiar circumstances attending the operation render an account of the manner in which it is done not altogether unnecessary. About eight or ten days before St Luke's Fair, (for they are baked at no other time of the year,) a certain quantity of oatmeal is made into dough, with warm water, and laid up in a vessel to ferment. Being brought to a proper degree of fermentation and consistency, it is rolled up into balls, proportionable to the intended largeness of the cakes. With the dough is commonly mixed a small quantity of sugar, and a little aniseed, or cinnamon. The baking is executed by women only; and they seldom begin their work till after sunset, and a night or two before the fair. A large space of the house, chosen for the purpose, is

marked out by a line drawn upon it. The area within is considered as consecrated ground; and is not, by any of the bystanders, to be touched with impunity. A transgression incurs a small fine, which is always laid out on drink for the use of the company. This hallowed spot is occupied by six or eight women, all of whom, except the toaster, seat themselves on the ground in a circular figure, having their feet turned towards the fire. Each of them is provided with a bakeboard, about two feet square, which they hold on their knees. The woman who toasts the cakes, which is done on a girdle suspended over the fire, is called the queen or bride; and the rest are called her maidens. These are distinguished from one another by names given them for the occasion. She who sits next the fire towards the east, is called the tòdler:* her companion on the left hand is called the hodler,† and the rest have arbitrary names given them by the bride, as Mrs Baker, best and worse maids, &c. The operation is begun by the todler, who takes a ball of the dough, forms it into a small cake, and then casts it on the bakeboard of the hodler, who beats it out a little thinner. This being done, she, in her turn, throws it on the board of her neighbour; and thus it goes round from east to west, in the direction of the course of the sun, until it comes to the toaster, by which time it is as thin and smooth as a sheet of paper. The first cake that is cast on the girdle is usually named as a gift to some well-known cuckold, from a superstitious opinion that thereby the rest will be preserved from mischance. Sometimes the cake is so thin as to be carried by the current of air up into the chimney. As the baking is wholly performed by the hand, a great deal of noise is

* Todle, to walk or move slowly, like a child.
† Hodle, to walk or move more quickly.

the consequence. The beats, however, are not irregular, nor destitute of an agreeable harmony; especially when they are accompanied with vocal music, which is frequently the case. Great dexterity is necessary, not only to beat out the cakes, with no other instrument than the hand, so that no part of them shall be thicker than another, but especially to cast them from one board on to another without ruffling or breaking them. The toasting requires considerable skill; for which reason the most experienced person in the company is chosen for that part of the work. One cake is sent round in quick succession to another, so that none of the company is suffered to be idle. The whole is a scene of activity, mirth, and diversion; and might afford an excellent subject for a picture."

The various incorporated trades within the burgh elect deacons or representatives, who choose a president or convener, the members constituting, along with the preses, the *Convener's Court.* The Convener of the Trades is a person of some consequence. In the parish church he is entitled to occupy a raised seat in the centre of the pew immediately behind the provost; and the large quarto Bible placed before him on the desk is of richer binding and more imposing dimensions than those which are provided for his brethren the deacons. During the latter portion of last century, a trader in Stirling, who, by a course of successful industry had bettered his circumstances, and at length attained the long-coveted position of Convener of the Trades, when he found himself for the first time seated in the Convener's official chair in the High Church, exclaimed audibly, "Is it possible that I am indeed a mortal man?"

The late Principal Campbell of Aberdeen, who keenly enjoyed a joke, one day addressed his hair-

dresser, who held the position of deacon of his trade, "Do you remember, Mr——, when Julius Cæsar was Provost of the Alton."* "I cannot say, Principal," was the deacon's reply, "that I remember him myself, but my father used to say that he was weel acquent wi' him!"

"Though I'm a deacon, I can be spoken to," said a St Andrews shoemaker to his friends, on meeting them after his being elected deacon of his trade.

In his Memorials of Angus and Mearns, Mr Jervise writes:—"At convivial meetings of the 'wabster (weaver) craft,' the following comprehensive sentiment in rhyme, known as the *Arbroath Weavers' Toast*, is given by the deacon; and it is needless to say that in the prosperity of the different points which it embraces, all countries and classes of men are more or less interested:—

'The life o' man, the death o' fish;
The shuttle, soil, and plough;
Corn, horn, linen, yarn;
Lint, an' tarry woo!'"

A late aged gentleman, who resided in Stirling, informed me that at a public dinner which was given to himself at Forfar early in the century, a number of the county gentlemen, who were present, concluded the proceedings of the evening by attempting to raise each other on a spade—an amusement then not uncommon at the close of festive entertainments in Forfarshire.

In former times, an executioner or *hangman* was attached to many of the Scottish burghs, and this functionary was, in respect of the utility of his services, deemed entitled to a recompense from the general body of the public. The hangman of Edinburgh was authorised to go about the weekly market with a large

* The Old Town of Aberdeen.

spoon, and therewith to help himself to a spoonful of grain from every sack brought to the market. At Stirling the executioner took victual from the farmer's sacks with a wooden dish or cap, which is still preserved in the public buildings of the place. The Aberdeen executioner was entitled to a fish from every fishwoman's *creel*, or basket. The hangman of St Andrews, whose office was hereditary, had several acres of land conferred on him by the Archbishop for his *valuable services* to the Church.

In modern times, the hangman's post became a sinecure, and the office was discontinued. The humbler civic functionaries now consist of the liveried attendants on the magistrates and council, a town-drummer, and a bellman. The two latter officials make public proclamations on the streets, to which they call attention respectively by tuck of drum and by ringing a hand-bell. Daniel M'Cormick, late town-drummer of Dundee, was a person of accurate and extensive scholarship. He was particularly conversant with Oriental literature. An itinerant teacher of Hebrew had visited the town, and issued handbills intimating that he undertook to impart a competent knowledge of the Hebrew language in a few lessons. He secured a public hall as his schoolroom, and was proposing to engage M'Cormick as the doorkeeper. "Do you teach Hebrew with or without the points?" said the drummer. The *soi-disant* professor asked impatiently what he knew about the matter. M'Cormick took a Hebrew Psalter from his pocket, and proceeded to read a portion both with the Masoretic points and without their use. The pretended Hebraist looked aghast, and was silent! He had not expected to find such learning in Dundee. If the town-drummer was so accomplished, how erudite must be the magistracy

and the merchants! Numbers assembled at the hall for a Hebrew lesson, but the preceptor had decamped. —The town bellman formerly summoned to funerals by tolling the bell, but this practice has long been discontinued.

The magistrates of Stirling lately appointed several persons to act as guides to the numerous strangers who visit that locality. A new cemetery was in the course of formation, and a stranger, observing a number of workmen levelling the soil, asked one of the guides as to the intention of the operations. "They're making a *seminary* for the dead," was the reply.

John Scott, the late keeper of Melrose Abbey, was a person of superior intelligence. A stanch upholder of Presbyterianism, John entertained a peculiar abhorrence of Popery and of the Romish priesthood. There is a Catholic chapel at Galashiels, and two priests connected with it had been visiting the Abbey. John described the building to the visitors, commenting as usual on the evils of Catholicism and the irregular conduct of the earlier priesthood.

> "The monks o' Melrose made guid kail
> On Fridays, when they fasted."

The priests heard John's stories unmoved; but on giving him a *douceur* at parting, one of them said, "I see, John, you don't know who we are." "Ou, ay," responded John, "I ken ye brawly; just twa emissaries o' the deevil."

The Rev. Dr Guthrie, in a speech on the Industrial School movement, delivered by him at Birmingham, in January 1861, stated, in illustration of the salutary effects of his scheme, that, having shortly before been in a town in Fife, he heard violin music when passing the prison. Having inquired the cause, he was met with the reply, "there 's naebody to pit into the prison noo, so they hae made it a dancing schulo."

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CHAPTER V.

LORDS AND LAIRDS.

No class of manners has, within the last half century, undergone more thorough and remarkable change than the habits and proceedings of country landowners. The Scottish peer and country gentleman of these days are personages totally different from their grandfathers. They seek intellectual and rational enjoyment, while their progenitors found their chief happiness in reckless field-sports or in convivial excess. Among the upper ranks of Scottish society, the practice of moderation is seldom violated in these times; it was outraged grievously when our octogenarian brethren were in their boyhood. It was deemed creditable and manly sixty years ago to rise from the dinner-table on the borders of inebriety; and it was not held as behaviour unworthy of a gentleman to fall from the chair in a state of helpless intoxication. An individual who did not choose to drink deeply was held to be utterly unsocial, and was apt to be excluded from the convivialities of his neighbourhood.

Lord Nairne, long an exile in France on account of his adherence to the house of Stuart, had conceived an intense disgust at the sober habits of the Parisians. Having one day got several of his Scottish friends assembled at his board, he said to them, on the cloth being removed, "I canna express to ye, gentlemen, the satisfaction I feel in getting men of some sense

about me, after being so long plagued wi' a set o' fules, nae better than brute beasts, that winna drink mair than what serves them!"

A late baronet of Ardgowan indulged in the hospitable practices of his time by securing the door of his dining-hall when he entertained guests, compelling all to enjoy his wine till they severally took their places under the table. The baronet was personally the last to succumb. The family tutor was admitted to one of these periodical entertainments, and though he took his due proportion of wine, the baronet found that he remained in his seat when all the others, with the exception of himself, were asleep on the floor. "Can you snuff the candle?" said the baronet to his young friend. The tutor was successful in his effort, which afforded evidence to his entertainer that he was still in possession of his faculties. "For this," said the baronet, referring to his powers of drinking, "I'll present you to the West Kirk of Greenock, when it becomes vacant." The tutor afterwards became a probationer of the Church, and, the West Church of Greenock falling vacant, he waited on the factor of his former constituent, and consulted him as to the promise made in such peculiar circumstances. "Was he drunk or sober," said the factor, "when he made the promise?" "I fear, all but quite drunk," said the probationer. "Then you are sure of the living," said the factor; "for, while Sir —— sometimes is oblivious of what he says when he is sober, he is sure to remember everything he says when he is drunk." The factor proved correct, for the reverend gentleman was shortly after presented to the charge.

Two country lairds were dining together. After their potations had become considerably advanced, a neighbouring clergyman happened to call. Both the

landowners were in a paroxysm of tears. "What are you greeting* for, gentlemen?" anxiously inquired the divine. "We are greeting," was the answer, "aboot the national debt!"

"A certain laird," says the writer of an article in the *Quarterly Review* for July 1861, "had quarrelled with his eldest son, and was believed to have made a settlement to disinherit him. The young man was in the army, and in process of time his regiment came to be quartered in a town near the residence of his father. The laird, as was his wont, invited the officers to dine with him; and the son, by the colonel's advice, came to dinner with the rest of the officers. The old gentleman perceived during the evening that his son was a sound and fair drinker; and when the officers took leave of their host, he said, 'That laddie,' pointing to his son, with whom he had not exchanged a word, 'may bide†' He abode accordingly for several days; and the father, finding him as much impressed by the duties of the table as himself, burnt some papers before his eyes, and said, 'Now you may go back to your regiment.' He went back, and in due time succeeded to the estate; nor did he ever during a long life fall off from this fair promise of his youth."

Old Armstrong, the Laird of Sorbietrees, in Liddesdale, had been attending one of those convivial meetings of neighbour-lairds, common in that district, early in the century. He had, as was usual with him, drunk over much, so that, in crossing the ford of the river Liddell, he fell from his horse partially into the water. He was discovered in the morning by one of his people, his head resting on the margin of the current. As a ripple of the stream occasionally

* Weeping. † Remain.

touched his mouth, he exclaimed, believing that he was still in the banqueting-place, "Nae mair, I thank ye; not a single drap mair!"

Mr James Rocheid, of Inverleith, was a man of extreme hauteur. One morning on his way from Musselburgh to Dalkeith, after a heavy fall of rain, he thought proper to ride on the footpath. Meeting a plainly-attired old gentleman walking, he in his usual manner ordered him out of his way. The old gentleman remonstrated, observing that the footpath was set apart for pedestrians. "Fellow," said Rocheid, "do you know who I am? I am James Rocheid, Esq., of Inverleith, justice of the peace. Who are you, sir, that presumes to question my conduct?" "Sir," replied the old gentleman, "you may be a justice of the peace, although you seem more likely to break the peace than keep it. As to who I am, I happen to be George Duke of Montague."* The confusion of Rocheid may be imagined.

When the drinking usages were prevalent, the desire for mental improvement was necessarily limited. The country laird seldom troubled himself with book literature, and the more inquiring only made a practice of scanning the columns of the weekly newspaper. The Earl of Airlie, who, like Lord Nairne, had long found an asylum in France from the consequences of his joining in the rebellion of 1745, acquired there some taste for perusing the public journals. On the reversal of his forfeiture he returned to his family estates, but spent his remaining years in seclusion. His chief enjoyment consisted in mastering the contents of the weekly newspaper, and in thereafter retailing the principal items of intelligence to his household. Every evening, precisely as the clock

* Father of the then Duchess of Buccleuch.

struck eight, his lordship descended from his usual apartment to the servants' hall, where seating himself on the butler's chest, he detailed the narrative of public events, with comments and criticisms of his own. My father, who assisted the parochial clergyman, was on one occasion an unseen auditor of his lordship's evening relations, and the scene was, according to his description, worthy of a sketch by Wilkie. Not to lose the satisfaction of being sole chronicler to his household, his lordship was in the habit of committing his newspaper to the flames when he had finished the perusal.

The seventh Earl of Abercorn was a man of singular character. He would not admit any person to his dinner-table, unless he had been formally invited by card. He was in the habit of walking with a clergyman in his neighbourhood who often also partook of dinner at the castle. During their ramble his lordship never communicated to his clerical associate any intention of inviting him in the evening, but on his return home the minister generally found a card conveying a formal invitation.—The Lord President of the Court of Session one day called for the Earl and told him that as it was a holiday in the court he would remain to dinner if it was agreeable to his lordship. "Not to-day, my lord," replied the Earl.

On the occasion of a marriage dinner which the Earl gave at his residence in London to some members of the Athole family, he dressed himself early that he might have time to examine the arrangements before the arrival of the company. On proceeding to the dining-room he noticed on the sideboard a pair of magnificent lustres which he knew were not his own. He called his servant, and demanded where he had procured them. "I got them," replied the butler, "from

the Duke of Buccleuch's servant, his Grace being from home." "Call the carriage," said his lordship. The carriage was brought to the door. The Earl entered it, was driven off, and in about half-an-hour returned with a pair of lustres, for which he paid £700. Recalling the butler he said to him, "Return the borrowed lustres, and, with my compliments to his Grace's gentleman, tell him that I will not require them."

His lordship's brother was a clergyman in Ireland, and had a family of seven daughters. Having been on a visit to his brother, the Earl met much affectionate attention from his nieces, and was urged to prolong his visit. The Earl, however, determined to leave at the time previously fixed, but on the evening prior to his intended departure, he asked his brother as to what fortune he could bestow upon each of his daughters. His brother told him that he must be well aware that as his means were limited, his daughters' fortunes would be very small. "I will go to bed," said the Earl. Next morning in stepping into his carriage, he said, "I had intended to leave my nieces something at my death. It may be as well to give it now," and without further remark, he put into his brother's hand a bank draft for £70,000, being a fortune to each of the ladies of £10,000.

Sir Michael Malcolm, Baronet, of Lochore, was originally a working joiner in Kinross, and possessed few advantages in respect of education. Being appointed a county magistrate on his accession to the family honours, he regularly took his seat at the Justice of Peace Court of the district. He had sentenced a cobbler to a short period of imprisonment for poaching, when, on the mittimus, which was concluded with some Latin words, being read by the clerk, the panel* demanded from the Bench an explanation of the myste-

* Prisoner.

rious expressions. "Let the fellow," said the irate Baronet, "undergo other ten days' imprisonment for contempt of court."

A gentleman lately wrote to a Dumfriesshire laird of the old school, requesting leave for a friend to shoot and course over a portion of the estate. The laird replied that "he was sorry he could not allow any *cursing* or *shouting* on his property."

Sir James Hale of Dunglass was a person of great intellectual vigour and considerable originality; but it was a doubt in the family while he was a boy whether he was to turn out a man of genius or a fool. When the family were in London he was taken to the top of St Paul's, where some one on the hopeful side was certain he would disclose himself by some grand burst of wonder. It was long of coming, but at last he screamed with delight, "Ee! there 's a cuddie!"*

The eccentricities of Scottish landowners of a former age have enriched several volumes of anecdotes. Sir John Malcolm of Lochore was reputed among his contemporaries for his exaggerated details of personal adventure. The following verses, celebrating his peculiarities, have been parodied by Burns:

"Ken ye ought o' Sir John Malcolm?
Igo and ago;
If he 's a wise man I mistak him,
Iram, coram, dago.

"To hear him o' his travels talk,
Igo and ago;
To go to London 's but a walk,
Iram, coram, dago.

"To see the leviathan skip,
Igo and ago:
And wi' his tail ding owre a ship,
Iram, coram, dago."

As formerly stated, Sir Michael Malcolm, a successor

* Donkey.

of Sir John, followed in his youth the occupation of a joiner. An ardent Jacobite, he proceeded to London in 1746 to be present at the trial of Lords Balmerino and Kilmarnock; and subsequent to the condemnation of these unfortunate noblemen, he undertook personally to discharge the duties of undertaker at their funerals. While standing on the scaffold at their execution, his tall and commanding form attracted the notice of a young lady, a niece of Earl Bathurst, who was a spectator of the tragic proceedings from an adjoining window. Learning his rank and chivalric devotedness to the cause for which the two noblemen suffered, she sought an introduction to him, and in due time became his wife.

Like this Baronet of Lochore, a late Mr Durham of Largo was noted for his curious stories of personal adventure, and a disposition to exaggerate. By none were his peculiarities more remarked than by his two sons, who subsequently obtained high rank in both branches of the public service—one becoming a general in the army, and the other acquiring the post of admiral and the honour of knighthood. When Sir Philip and his elder brother the general were boys, they suggested one evening to their father *a new game.* "We propose," said Philip, "if you will join us, papa, that we should each deposit a pound on the table, and that he who tells the biggest lee should get the whole of the money." "Boys," said Mr Durham, "I cannot join you in such a game, for I never told a lie in my life." "Papa," simultaneously exclaimed the young rogues, "the money is yours; you 've gained the game."

Mr Durham was in the habit of accusing his sons of this propensity, which was believed peculiarly to attach to himself. The following is in its way unrivalled.

The future Sir Philip was a midshipman on board the Royal George, and was one of seven saved from the wreck of that ill-fated vessel. On the tidings of his escape reaching his native district, an intimate friend of the family called at Largo House to congratulate old Mr Durham on the providential event. "Weel," said Mr Durham to his visitor, "Philip writes that he 's safe, but he 's sic a leer I really dinna ken whether I can believe him."

The following epitaph on Mr Durham was suggested by one of his contemporaries:—

"Here lies Durham, but
Durham *lies* not here."

Among the many extravagances associated with the Hon. William Maule, subsequently Lord Panmure, the following is peculiarly characteristic. Happening to be on a visit to Perth, he sallied forth one evening with some companions, and proceeded to the destruction of the lamps along the principal streets. The magistrates met next morning to devise measures to punish the outrage. Hearing of the conclave, the youthful culprit presented himself in the Council Chamber. He requested an interview with the Provost, and informed him that, vexed to find such inferior lamps in so fine a city, he had destroyed them with a view to presenting in their stead a set of lamps handsome and worthy of the place. The explanation was abundantly satisfactory, and a vote of thanks was awarded.

The late Duke of Gordon, when Marquis of Huntly, was famous for personating the gaberlunzie.* His father's factor was allowed a handsome sum for incidental charities. Disguising himself as a beggar, he called on the factor, and pled for "an awmous."† The

* Beggar. † Alms.

servant ordered him to be gone, as no beggars were admitted. The mock-mendicant insisted on seeing the master, who appeared; but, notwithstanding his tale of deep distress, he was promptly told that the dogs would be hounded at him if he did not instantly depart. At the next settlements, the marquis undertook to manage the charities himself.

The Rev. Dr Thomas Stewart, minister of Newburgh, Fifeshire, (died 1819,) was, during an early period of his career, tutor in the family of Clephane, of Kirkness. A fashionable party was being entertained in the dining-room, so that tea was presented to the tutor in his bedroom. Mr Stewart at once opened the window, and, without remark, threw the tray and tea apparatus into the court. The maid-servant duly reported the outrage to her master, who, instead of being offended, was so much pleased with the manly independence of the governor of his sons, that he promised to secure for him a church living, which he accordingly did.

The late Mr Stirling of Keir was especially beloved for his kindly nature and benevolent qualities. Only on one occasion did he allow a beggar to depart from his residence without an alms. He had just sat down to dinner, and was irritated by the interruption. Reflecting on his refusal, the laird ordered his saddled horse to be immediately brought out; he mounted and galloped down the avenue. "There," said Mr Stirling, handing half-a-crown to the mendicant, whom he overtook, "it must not happen that you should be the only petitioner whom I have not heard."

The laird of Waterton, in Aberdeenshire, having apprehended a sheep-stealer in the act, committed him for trial to the county prison. Visiting the prisoner on the evening prior to the assize, he asked

him what he meant to do. "To confess, and entreat the mercy of the court," was the reply. "Confess!" said the relentant landowner; "why, man, ye 'll be hanged. Na, na, deny it to my face." The prisoner took the laird's advice, and was acquitted.

An uncle of the late Earl of Kelly, an eccentric Jacobite, hearing that one of his sons had accepted from Government the office of superintendent of the hulks, sarcastically remarked, "Had the lad said he wanted a place, I think I micht have had interest to get him made hangman o' Perth."

An M.P., who owned extensive estates, and possessed considerable personal celebrity, was spending a few days at the residence of a noble family. There were several interesting and accomplished young ladies in the family, to whom the honourable member, as in duty bound, showed every attention. Just as he was about to take leave, the nobleman's lady proceeded to consult him in a matter which, she alleged, was causing her no little distress. "It is reported," said the countess, "that you are to marry my daughter L——, and what shall we do?—what shall we say about it?" "Oh," quietly responded the considerate M.P., "just say she refused me!"

A Scottish gentlewoman claimed superiority on behalf of her family, because some of them had been afflicted with gout. It had been mentioned that one of her humbler neighbours was suffering from the complaint, when she exclaimed, "Na, na, it 's only my father and Lord Galloway that have the regular gout."

The following incident is told concerning the origin of "Almacks" in London. The celebrated Dr Cullen was originally a surgeon in Hamilton. He had two sisters, one of whom became waiting-maid to the

Duchess of Hamilton. In the course of time, the waiting maid was married to the duke's valet, whose name was Macall. As they were both favourites of the family, the duke set them up in a hotel in London, where, finding the Scottish name of Macall rather unfashionable, they changed it to Almack, and this establishment was long one of the most celebrated resorts of fashion in the metropolis.

CHAPTER VI.

PUNS AND REPARTEE.

ACCORDING to Drummond of Hawthornden, it was a remark of Doctor Arthur Johnston, on being told of a bishop who seldom preached, that he was "a very *rare* preacher."

The Honourable Henry Erskine was celebrated as a punster. Meeting on the street one morning an old friend returning from St Bernard's Well, he exclaimed, "Oh, Mr S., I see you never weary in *well*-doing."—Mr Robert Haldane of Airthrey had informed Mr Erskine of his being preserved from the effects of a dangerous stumble on the steep banks of the Ochils by seizing hold on the stunted trunk of a tree. "It had been a post for life," said the humorist.

Meeting in Edinburgh a country friend, Erskine asked him to come to his house. The friend excused himself by pleading haste, adding, "I only came to town for a coat." "A coat," said the lawyer, "I had much rather that it had been a *suit*."—At a dinner party, Erskine was seated near Miss Henrietta ——, commonly called Miss Hennie, who had been celebrated for her beauty, but was then somewhat past the meridian of life. "They say you 're a great man for making puns," said Miss Hennie to the wit; "could you make a pun on me?" "Ah, *Hennie*," was the cruel rejoinder, "ye are no *chicken!*"—"You cannot play on

my name," said Mr Dunlop to Mr Erskine, as he was exercising his gift one evening. "Nothing more simple," was the immediate answer; "*lop* off the last syllable and it 's *done*."

Mr Durham of Largo was an intimate associate of Erskine, and in some degree shared his powers of humour. They met accidentally in the capital, when Erskine remarked that he could not ask his friend to dinner, as he was *penting** his house for the reception of a second wife. "Weel, weel," said Durham, "ye may *pent* awa, Harry, and ye may also *re-pent*."

James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, used to relate that he had only once stumbled on a pun. Some friends were dining with him at Mount Benger, when one of the company remarked that Dr Parr had married clandestinely, and that nobody knew who his wife was. "I suspect," said the Shepherd, "she must have been a little below *Par*."

The late Lord Robertson, a senator of the College of Justice, possessed remarkable talents as a punster. "Pray, Lord Robertson," said a lady, "can you tell me what sort of a bird the bulbul is?" "I suppose," replied the humorous judge, "it is the male of the coo coo."†

A miner, who had lost his leg by a colliery accident, waited upon Robertson when he was at the bar, to consult him regarding an action of compensation. "You have come to the wrong man," said Robertson. "Go to York Place, and ask for one Shank More." The humorist referred to his professional brother, the late Mr Shank More, advocate.

A reverend doctor applied to his heritors to provide a better fence to his garden. One of them proposed a fence of "stabs and railing." "Stabs and railing!" said the indignant incumbent, who had been keenly

* Painting. † Cuckoo.

opposed by his heritors on previous occasions, "I have had nothing else since I came among you."

The Rev. Dr Gillan was some years minister of the *quoad sacra* chapel at Holytown. By working occasionally in the manse garden he relieved the labour of preparation for his public duties. While he was so recreating himself, one of the chapel managers happened to pass, and in familiar salutation addressed him: "Well, Mr Gillan, what are you about?" "Why, John," said the minister, who was fashioning some celery beds, "I am doing what you should have done for me—I am raising my *celery*." The manager was not long in waiting on his colleagues with the intelligence that the minister was complaining of his *salary*. An augmentation was immediately granted.

Referring to Viscountess Stair, *née* Margaret Ross of Ballneil, Wigtownshire, (died 1692,) Mr Robt. Chambers, in his "Domestic Annals" writes:—"A local historian attributes to her ladyship one of the best puns extant. Graham of Claverhouse (commonly pronounced Clavers) was appointed Sheriff of Wigtownshire in 1682. On one occasion, when this violent persecutor had been inveighing, in her presence, against an illustrious reformer, she said, "Why are you so severe on the character of John Knox? You are both reformers: he gained his point by clavers;* you attempt to gain yours by knocks."

Lady Wallace, who was celebrated for her wit, was attending a ball at Edinburgh, where a young gentleman, the son of his majesty's printer, attracted attention owing to his being attired in a splendid costume of green and gold. As he had not previously appeared in public, there was a general anxiety to ascertain who

* Chatter.

he was. "Oh, don't you know him?" said Lady Wallace, to some inquirers; "it is young ——, bound in calf, and gilt, but not lettered."

Shortly after Dr Johnson's return to London from his northern tour, a Scottish gentlewoman, who had invited him to dinner, presented on the table a tureen of *hotch-potch*. Having asked the doctor if it was good, he replied, in his usual manner, "Madam, it is good for hogs." "Then, pray, sir," said the lady, "let me help you to a little more."

The lady of a late M.P. for an eastern county was canvassing a miner for his vote to her husband, then a candidate for Parliamentary honours. At a short distance were a group of juvenile miners, one of whom remarked to his neighbour, "Ae, man, but she has awfu' red hair; she wad set a body a-lowe."* "You are quite safe," said the lady, turning to the speaker, "you are too green to burn."

Sir Walter Scott, in a foot-note to one of his metrical romances, narrates the following characteristic Scottish anecdote:—An old woman, residing in Fifeshire, lamenting her desolate condition to one of her neighbours, death having been very busy in her household, thus related her bereavements:—"Four years ago I lost my daughter, a fine sonsie† lassie; the next year, my son, a really wiselike‡ lad, was ta'en frae me; the year after that, my gudeman§ depairted this life, and that was a sair grief and tribulation to me; an' last year oor coo deed, but, I am thankful to say, I was able to sell *its* hide, an' that brocht me fifteen shillings!"

The Rev. Mr Anderson had, at a presbytery dinner, indulged in his usual habit of punning. In returning

* On flame. † Stout. ‡ Handsome. § Husband.

home he was accompanied part of the way by a clerical neighbour, who especially enjoyed the humour of his conversation. They were about to separate for their respective manses at a place where was a morass or peat bog. "Just one pun more before we part," said the delighted associate. "Nay," replied the humorist, affecting to sink a little in the morass, "you have fairly bogged me now."

The Rev. John Brown of Haddington was in the habit of proposing on festive occasions a certain young lady as his toast. Having abandoned the practice, he was asked for a reason. "Because," said he, "I have toasted her for sixteen years, without being able to make her *brown*, and so I 've resolved to toast her no longer."

When it was proposed in the General Assembly, many years ago, to form a committee for the improvement of the psalmody, it was moved by a member that it should consist of Mr Singer of Fala, Mr Sangster of Humbie, and Mr Lo-rimer of Haddington.

The late Rev. Thomas Goldie of Coldstream was dining with a friend at Ballachulish. After dinner, he was examining in his hand a valuable ring, worn by a young lady of the family, when he was unexpectedly asked by the host to ring the bell. Replacing the ring on the lady's finger, Mr Goldie humorously exclaimed, "I 'm ringing the *belle*, sir."

Mr James Ballantyne, the distinguished printer, was dining with Mr Creech, the publisher, when the latter happened to expatiate on the excellence of his wines, especially his *hock*. Perceiving that the latter was not on the table, Mr Ballantyne suggested that *hoc* should be *hic*.

Mr Naismith, the celebrated dentist, had complained to Dr Chalmers that he was occasionally disturbed

by the noise of his students. In conveying a warning to the young gentlemen of his class, consequent upon the complaint, the Dr remarked, "You must be cautious, gentlemen, not to offend Mr Naismith, for few men are so much in the mouths of the public."

A young lady complained that she could not accept an invitation to a ball, as she had no *beau*. "I'll go with you," said the gentleman addressed; "for," added he, "*am-a-bo*."

A countrywoman sent for the physician. Having stated her case, the medical gentleman inquired whether she had taken anything for her complaint. "Ou' ay," was the reply, "I just took something oot o' my ain head," meaning of her own suggestion. "A lucid idea," rejoined the witty doctor.

"How very cold it is," said an outside passenger on a stage coach which was drawn by four horses. "It is odd," exclaimed a wit, "when we have got two pair of drawers."

The Rev. William Buchanan is possessed of a large share of ready humour. At an evening party, some one related the incident of a barber having corrected an Edinburgh Professor in a Latin quantity. "I don't wonder," said Mr Buchanan, "a false quantity has always been deemed a *barbarism*."

The Rev. J. M. —— of St Andrews was relating to a clerical friend how a former Principal of one of the colleges, in the opening address of the College Session, had described such benefits from the pursuit of science as to turn the boys' heads. "He holds out to their fancy professorships—nay, chancellorships—and even sceptres, while he well knows few will rise higher than parish schoolmasters." "He promises sceptres, and gives only rods," said the friend.

The Rev. Dr B. now minister of F——, Kincar-

dineshire, was, soon after his being licensed as a preacher, met by a Mr *Penny*, in the streets of Glasgow, who accosted him thus:—"Well, Mr B., I hope you will not be afraid if I come to hear you on Sabbath," to which the rev. gentlemen replied, "I trust, Mr *Penny*, I would not be afraid, though a *sovereign* came to hear me preach!"

The widow of the poet Burns, was not remarkable for any peculiar brilliancy of wit, but on one occasion the worthy lady made a tolerable pun. A gentleman had been calling who strongly insisted on obtaining some relic of the bard. Mrs Burns stated her entire inability to satisfy him, as she had long since parted with everything of the kind that was remarkable. "Indeed, sir," added Mrs Burns, "unless you take myself, I really can think of no other relic* of him that it is in my power to give you."

Repartee is a species of witty gladiatorship, which, skilfully wielded, is sure to set "the table in a roar." The Hon. Henry Erskine was, notwithstanding his powers as a humorist, once overcome in wit by a country clergyman. The Rev. Dr M'Cubbin, minister of Douglas, and Mr Erskine, had met at the dinner-table of a mutual friend. A dish of cresses being on the table, the doctor took a supply on his plate, which he proceeded to eat, using his fingers. Erskine remarked that the procedure reminded him of Nebuchadnezzar. "Ay," retorted Dr M'Cubbin, "that 'll be because I 'm eatin' amang the brutes."

The particulars of the following anecdote are gleaned from a gossiping work, entitled "Glasgow, Past and Present," published in 1851. About the beginning of last century, there lived in Ayr, an itinerant musician, named Maguire. A brother of his wife, whose

* Relict.

name was M'Rae, had absconded in youth from his father's house, and had not been heard of for forty years, when he returned with a fortune, acquired as Governor of Madras. Being a bachelor, he intimated his intention of leaving his fortune to the four daughters of his sister. The eldest of the four was married, in 1744, to William, thirteenth Earl of Glencairn. The Earl of Cassilis had quarrelled with Lord Glencairn at a ball, and spoke to him contemptuously as having married a fiddler's daughter. "Yes," was the reply, and I remember one of my father-in-law's favourite airs was "The gipsies cam to Lord Cassilis' yett," referring to an elopement of a Countess of Cassilis with the gipsies, celebrated in the old song of "Johnny Fa."

Hugo Arnot was of a form so emaciated, that he was often compared to a walking skeleton. He was one day, in his usual eccentric manner, eating on the street a *speldin*, or dried fish. Mr Erskine came up. "You see," said Arnot, "I'm not starving." "I confess," replied the wit, "you are very like your meat."

Arnot openly avowed infidel principles. He was riding on a white horse one Sabbath afternoon, when he met the celebrated Rev. Dr Erskine of the Greyfriars returning from church. "I wonder that a man of your sense," said the infidel, "would preach to a parcel of old wives: what was your text?" "The text," replied Dr Erskine, "was in the sixth chapter of Revelation, 'And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him!'" Arnot gave reins to his horse and galloped off.

A wood-merchant, in a northern burgh, who was somewhat noted for his forward and blustering manners, was visited at his wood-yard by a reverend

doctor, one of the ministers of the place. "You see, doctor," said the wood-merchant, attempting a pun, "I live like Parnell's Hermit,

"Far in the windings of a woody vale,"

to which the doctor promptly responded by quoting the next line—

"There lived, by native modesty concealed."

The force of the repartee was understood, and enjoyed by the bystanders.

A clergyman, renowned for his powers of repartee, was listening to a gentleman who was speaking boastfully of his strength. "With a plain snaffle," said the gentleman, "I could lay the strongest horse I ever crossed on his back." "You are then," said the clergyman, "the completest horse-couper in the kingdom."

During the panic of the French invasion in 1803, the burgh of Anstruther Easter raised a company of Volunteers. At a public meeting held to arrange as to whether the colour of the uniform should be red or blue, Bailie Chalmers, an officer of the corps, suggested that they "should just tak the blue, for it was mair peaceable like." Mr Lumsdaine, the laird of Innergelly, remarked, "Ye 're richt, bailie; for it wadna be an easy matter to mak you *waur-like*."*

General Stirling of Musselburgh rose from the ranks. He established himself, on his retirement from the army, in his native town. On a public occasion the toast of his health was proposed by one of his old acquaintances. "I remember the general," said the speaker, "when he was wheeling a barrow of turnips." "If I had possessed your brains," interrupted General Stirling, who disliked such allusions, "I had been wheeling turnips still."

* Worselooking.

A late reverend doctor in the town of Perth, when he was an old man and wearing a wig, was visiting a young clerical friend at an early hour of the morning. When he arrived, the young minister was shaving. The doctor, wishing to be jocose, exclaimed, with feigned surprise, "What! have you been shaving? When I was a young man sheep's heads were singed, they were never shaved." "That will be the reason you wear a wig, doctor," was the prompt reply.

Mr Mudie, the author of some popular works on the Seasons, was originally a teacher in Dundee. He happened to be one of a tea-party at the house of the Rev. Dr M'Vicar. The doctor was reputed for the suavity of his manners, and his especial politeness towards the fair sex. Handing a dish of honey to one of the ladies, he said, in his wonted manner, "Do take a little honey, Miss ——; 'tis so sweet, so like yourself." Mr Mudie could not restrain his native tendency to humour; so, handing the butter-dish to the host, he exclaimed, "Take a little butter, doctor, 'tis so like yourself."

Mr Aytoun, the laird of Kinaldie, was particularly indifferent respecting his attire, but was noted for his powers both of compliment and banter. Walking one fine summer morning on the *Scores* promenade at St Andrews, he met a lady acquaintance, whom he saluted with his usual courtesy. "Good morning, madam; how well you are looking to-day!" "I 'm sorry I cannot return the compliment," responded the lady, adverting to the plainness of the laird's apparel. "Poh," said Mr Aytoun, as he walked on, "you might have lied as I did."

A married lady, who enjoyed a wipe against the bachelors, remarked in a company that a tax should be imposed on celibacy. "Yes, madam," responded

Colonel M'Donald, "as on all other *luxuries*."—In the following instances, the victory was obtained by the fair sex.

The Rev. Dr Alexander Carlyle relates in his "Autobiography" the following brief narrative of a jocular conversation of the beautiful and witty Peggy Douglas of Mains, afterwards Duchess of Douglas. Peggy had been indulging her wonted raillery at the expense of the Rev. Thomas Clelland, a bachelor clergyman of middle life. "After," writes Dr Carlyle, "hearing patiently all the efforts of her wit, 'Margaret,' says he, 'you know that I am master of the parish register where your age is recorded, and that I know when you must be with justice called an old maid, in spite of your juvenile airs.' 'What care I, Tom;' said she, 'for I have for some time renounced your worthless sex. I have sworn to be Duchess of Douglas, or never to mount a marriage bed.' This happened in May 1745." "She made her purpose good," adds the doctor. "When she made this prediction she was about thirty. It was fulfilled a few years after."

Colonel M'Donald, who commanded the Perthshire cavalry, was, at an evening party, complaining of his officers, and alleging that all the duties of the regiment devolved upon himself. "I am," said he, "my own captain, my own lieutenant, my own cornet." "And trumpeter too!" added a lady.

Sir J. R., who was of a somewhat questionable reputation, was entertaining a party of friends. After dinner he intimated a toast; and, looking in the face of Mrs M., who was more distinguished for wit than beauty, said, "I'll give you, 'Honest men and bonny lasses.'" "With all my heart," exclaimed Mrs M.; "I'll drink it, for it neither applies to you nor me."

A reluctance ever to be characterised as old is a well-known weakness of the female sex. The Rev. Mr Robb, Episcopal clergyman at St Andrews, waited shortly after his ordination on the Hon. Miss Erskine, one of his congregational adherents. Miss Erskine was an octogenarian. After a few commonplaces, Mr Robb exclaimed, "I perceive, madam, you 're a very old lady." "I perceive, sir," rejoined the offended gentlewoman, "you 're a *very young man*."

Miss Isabella M. of Dundee is one of the smartest of her sex. A gentleman, resident at Broughty-Ferry, remarked to her, "what fine dark hair you have got, Miss M. My wife, who is much younger than you, has her hair quite gray." "Indeed," rejoined Miss M., "if I had been your wife, my hair no doubt had been gray too."

"Do lean a little more on my arm, Miss M.," said a late rev. doctor to this lady, as one evening he was conducting her home from a party; "unless a gentleman feels the gentle pressure of a lady's arm, where is the pleasure?" "And unless she has some support, where is her profit?" exclaimed Miss M.

From a graceful tribute to the memory of the late excellent Miss Catherine Sinclair, lately published for private circulation, we select the following:—"In her younger days she was a frequent visitor at Abbotsford. On one occasion a question arose as to the chieftainship of the clan Macdonald, when the rival claims of Lord Macdonald, Glengarry, and Clanranald were discussed. Sir Walter, knowing that Miss Sinclair was descended, through her mother, from Alexander, first Lord Macdonald, began jocularly to disparage the claims of that family, the Macdonalds of Sleate, or Slate, as he affected to call them, after an obscure parish in the Isle of Skye. Miss Sinclair interrupted

him. 'Well, Sir Walter, say what you please, you will always find the slates at the top of the house!' She then added, 'Did you ever hear of my uncle's reply when Glengarry wrote to say that he had discovered evidence to prove himself the chief of the Macdonalds? It is a reply that I am proud of. "My dear Glengarry,—As soon as you can prove yourself to by *my* chief, I shall be ready to acknowledge you; in the meantime,—I am *yours*, MACDONALD."' 'That letter,' exclaimed Sir Walter, 'is the most pointed that I ever heard or read of.' Miss Sinclair, conversing with the old Earl of Buchan, brother of Lord Chancellor Erskine, expressed astonishment at some instance of ingratitude. 'Never be surprised at ingratitude,' said the aged peer; 'look at your Bible. The dove to which Noah thrice gave shelter in the ark, no sooner found a resting-place for the sole of her foot than she returned no more to her benefactor.' 'Very true,' replied Miss Sinclair; 'give a man a ladder to go up, and immediately he turns his back upon you.'"

A commercial traveller related to us the following:—He had arrived at a hotel in Forres, late in the afternoon, and asked the waitress to bring him something to eat, as he was famishing. "What will you have, sir?" asked the waitress. "Bring a roasted goose, if you have it," impatiently answered the traveller. "Then ye must gang on the spit yoursel, sir," said the smiling attendant, as she left the apartment.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PEOPLE, SHREWD AND SIMPLE.

Among the industrial classes of the Scottish people, there is a remarkable diversity between shrewd intelligence on the one hand, and positive simplicity on the other. Nor is shrewdness the characteristic only of a few. There is scarcely a hamlet in North Britain which does not possess its "oracle," while the simpleton is to be sought for in a much wider range. The blacksmith at Glammis was greatly reputed for his "mother wit." He was the Ulysses and lexicographer of the district. A countryman asked him for an explanation of the word *metaphysics*. "Weel," said Vulcan, "I think I 've hit on the meanin'. When ane is speakin' in a way that naebody can understand, and when the speaker himsel disna ken what he wad be at—that is metaphysics."

The blacksmith is frequently the most intelligent man in the place. His smithy is a constant resort of the villagers; and if he has limited opportunities of gleaning knowledge from books, he gathers much that is curious from the conversation of neighbours.—Dr M'Knight of Edinburgh, when minister of a country parish, was asked by the parish blacksmith for the loan of a theological work. The doctor, who was afraid of finger-marks on his expensive volume, stated that he never lent books out of the house, but that

the smith was welcome to come to the manse and read it there. Shortly after, the rev. doctor was about to proceed to a neighbouring parish to officiate for the incumbent, when it was discovered that the key of the stable was amissing. The doctor sent for the blacksmith to force open the door, but received the reply that he was welcome to the use of his tools in the smithy, but that he never lent them out of the house!"

When the present fashionable spa of Bridge of Allan was a small agricultural hamlet, it was the abode of an old cobbler who was renowned for his witty sayings, and was never known to be put out. One day, as he was walking in front of his little cottage, two young officers from Stirling Castle came up. One had previously betted with the other that he would over-match the cobbler. "How far have we to go, Sawney?" said the confident. "Just three miles, replied the cobbler. "How do you know?" insisted the querist. "Because," answered the cobbler, "it s three miles to Stirling, an' it 's three to Dunblane, and there 's a gallows at baith!" It is necessary to explain, that at the period of the incident, there were public executioners at both places.

A rich but parsimonious old Highlander, resident in Glasgow, was visited by a country cousin, who solicited a loan of five pounds. "It 's too bad, Donald," was the reply, "to joke at the expense of a poor man!"

Thomas Neil, precentor in the Old Church at Edinburgh, was celebrated for his humour. Tam and a thirsty crony met in the Potterrow,* one afternoon after a night of heavy drinking. They both stood in much need of a drop to brace their nerves, but had not a stiver between them. "Come,"

* *Scottice*, Patterraw.

said Tam, after some consideration, "let 's see what chance will provide." They accordingly dived into the house of an old acquaintance, a gill was called, and the landlord was invited to sit down, which he readily did, to oblige so *auld* a friend as the precentor. The whisky went round, and a conversation ensued on the alterations then going on in the city. "What wi' levelling streets an' bigging brigs,* they 'll no leave ae stane o' the auld toon aboon anither," said the landlord. "It 's a shame," rejoined Tam, "and sic an auncient toun. I 'm tauld the apostle Paul ance visited this very district we 're sitting in the noo." "Nonsense," exclaimed the landlord, "I 've read the Testament mony a time, an' I ne'er saw sic a thing in 't." "What 'll ye bet then," said the wily precentor. "It 's no for the like o' me to be betting," said the landlord, "but I 'll haud† ye the gill on the table there 's no a word aboot the Patter-raw." The Testament was produced. Tam turned over the leaves with affected difficulty, till at last he hit upon the passage, Acts xxi. 1, "We came with a straight course unto Coos, and the day following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Pa-ta-ra." Against such conclusive evidence the simple host could urge no appeal.

The old country farmer was pawky, humorous, and full of jocundity. A probationer of the Church had been officiating in his native parish in East Lothian, and had been somewhat lengthy in his services. "I gave you good measure yesterday," said he to a farmer in the place, "and I know that you farmers like that." "Ou ay," said the farmer, "we like gude measure, but we like it weel dighted‡ too."

A countryman in passing a merchant's office in

* Building bridges. † Hold. ‡ Winnowed.

Dundee, became curious to know what was conducted within. Opening the door, he observed a solitary clerk. "Eh! what d'ye sell here?" said the rustic. "Blockheads," responded the clerk, with a contemptuous look at the intruder. "Ye maun hae had a quick sale," said the imperturbed visitor, "for they seem to be a' awa but ane."

In a recent case of disputed settlement, a learned counsel, in his pleading, argued that of two clergymen, duly qualified by licence, it mattered not to the parishioners who got the church. A rustic auditor exclaimed, "Heich!* does the lad mean to tell us that the kye will thrive as weel on a frosty neep† as on ane sound and sappy." ‡

During a parliamentary election for the county of Perth, Sir John Campbell solicited a farmer named M'Gregor, to speak to his son in order to induce him to vote for Sir George Murray. The farmer said that it was positively useless, as his son had pledged himself to the opposite party. "He is not a true M'Gregor," said Sir John; "there is some bad blood in him." "I wadna doubt," said M'Gregor, "for his mother was a *Campbell.*"

At an evening party in Aberdeen, a gentlewoman present had resolved to indulge a little banter at the expense of a member of the company, who was deep in the study of natural history. "Pray, sir," said the lady, "could you tell me, how, when we were lately at the coast, we were followed for nearly a mile by a number of geese." "Really I am at a loss," replied the youth, "unless on the principle that birds of a feather flock together." The banterer was discomfited.

General Anstruther of Airdrie, who represented the St Andrews district of burghs at the period of the

* Heigh ho! † Turnip. ‡ Luscious.

Porteous riots, had, by voting with the Government against the city of Edinburgh, become excessively unpopular. In crossing the Forth, he deemed himself unsafe at the usual ferries, and so employed some fishermen to row him between Earlsferry and North Berwick. Talking familiarly with the rowers, he remarked in jest, "I suppose you fellows are all great smugglers?" "Ou ay," replied one of them; "but I dinna think we ever smuggled a general before."

The celebrated George Dempster of Dunnichen, in his canvass for the representation of the St Andrews burghs, had been recommended to obtain the favour of the voters through their wives. During his canvass in St Andrews, he had, in the absence of a voter on whom he waited, experienced a kindly reception from "the gudewife." At parting, Mr Dempster, in the free manner of the period, saluted her on the cheek, slipping, at the same time, a few guineas into the hand which had modestly been extended to protect her face. Delighted with the sight of the yellow pieces, the matron enthusiastically called to the candidate as he withdrew, "Kiss my dochter too, sir!"

The shrewdness of Scottish females is further illustrated by the following anecdotes:—A farmer's widow in Galloway rented a cottage, with the privilege of a cow's pasturage in an adjoining meadow, on the estate of the Catholic family of Maxwell of Munches. The factor, one Crichton, had summarily deprived her of the privilege of the cow's grass, and, inexorable to her entreaties, had positively refused to restore it. The widow ventured at length to wait upon the laird; but on arriving at his residence, she found the household engaged in observing a principal festival of the Romish Church. On such an occasion she was informed that the laird could not be seen on secular business, but

the widow positively insisted on being introduced to his presence. The *mêlée* which ensued brought the laird to the hall, who spoke kindly to the widow, and readily granted her request. An image of the Virgin was prominently displayed in the hall, and the laird stated, in reply to the widow's inquiries, that it was a representation of "our Lady," to whom Catholics prayed that she might intercede for them with her Son. "Deed, sir," said the widow, "I gaed lang and dreich* to yer honour's factor, when I micht as weel hae been at hame; but when I applied to yersel, the thing was done at ance. So I wad hae ye to see Himsel if ye wish to be saired."†

A reverend professor was assisting at the communion season in a parish in Forfarshire. A clever country housewife was severely animadverting on his preaching, to a neighbour, on their return from church. "Whisht, woman," said the neighbour, "they say that's the man that maks the ministers." "Then," said the undaunted critic, "he must hae gi'en a' to them, and keepit naething to himsel."

The Rev. Dr Carlyle was, he records, indebted to the shrewdness of an old woman for obtaining an undisturbed settlement as minister of Inveresk, while opposition had been contemplated. The doctor had recommended himself to the favour of his friend so early as his sixth year, by reading from the top of a tombstone the Song of Solomon to about a dozen of persons who had one Sabbath been excluded by a crowd from his father's church at Prestonpans. We present the narrative in Dr Carlyle's own words:—"As many people from Inveresk parish frequented her shop at Dalkeith on market-days, the conversation naturally fell on the subject of who was to be their

* Long and wearily. † Served.

minister. By this time I had been presented, but they said it would be uphill work, for an opposition was rising against so young a man, to whom they had many faults, and that they expected to be able to prevent the settlement. 'Your opposition will be altogether in vain,' said Mrs Ann, 'for I know that it is foreordained that he shall be your minister. He foretold it himself when he was but six years of age; and you know that "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings,"' &c. The case was, that soon after I had read the Bible to the old wives in the churchyard I was diverting myself on Mrs Ann's stairhead, as was often the case. She came to the door, and, stroking my head, caressing me, she called me a fine boy, and hoped to live to see me my father's successor. 'No, no,' says I, (I suppose alarmed at the thoughts of my father dying so soon,) 'I 'll never be minister of that church; but yonder 's my church,' pointing to the steeple of Inveresk, which was distinctly seen from the stairhead. She held up her hands with wonder, and stored it up in her heart; and telling this simple story twenty times every market-day to Musselburgh people for several months, it made such an impression that the opposition died away."

Miss M., an elderly maiden lady, called on the mother of my informant to inquire as to the character of a servant who was leaving her. "Servants," remarked Miss M., "are the greatest plague of life." Our informant's mother smiled incredulously. "You may think differently," added Miss M., "but I'm not married."

Dr Jamieson, the Scottish lexicographer, published a poem entitled "Eternity." It was some time after the subject of conversation in a company, when a lady, who was present, remarked that it was well

named "Eternity," for it would never be read *in time.*

A late Miss Dalrymple of New Hailes was deformed in person, but possessed a large fortune. She was in the habit of saying that for the honour of mankind she never had an offer.

A late minister of Biggar, who was a slavish reader in the pulpit, closed his discourse with the words, "I add no more." "Because ye canna," exclaimed an old woman from her pew.

About the close of last century, the mothers of Stirlingshire sung their infants to rest by a lively air, composed to the following *jeu d'esprit,* on the practices of the good folks of the district who were in the habit of frequenting, for social festivities, an hostelry in Stirling known as "Catherine's House on the Green." Some of the verses we have recovered through the kindness of a gentlewoman. It will be observed that the peculiarities of the different lairds are skilfully depicted in the ballad :—

CHORUS.

There 's chappin' o' cods* and makin' o' beds
At Catherine's house, at Catherine's house :
There 's chappin' o' cods and makin' o' beds
At Catherine's house, at Catherine's house;
And oh it 's rare the fun that was there
At Catherine's house, at Catherine's house;
And oh it 's rare the fun that was there
At Catherine's house on the green, jo.

The laird o' Polmaise cam' drivin' his chaise
To Catherine's house, &c.
The laird o' Gargunnock cam' eating a bannock†
To Catherine's house, &c.
The laird o' Dunmore puff'd his pipe at the door
O' Catherine's house, &c.
The laird o' Airth cam' cryin' out dearth
At Catherine's house, &c.

* Beating of pillows. † A coarse cake.

The laird o' Craigforth cam' wi' news frae the North
To Catherine's house, &c.
The laird o' the Cambus cam' seekin' an awmous *
At Catherine's house, &c.
The laird o' Dunblane cam' ridin' his lane
To Catherine's house, &c.
The laird o' Keir cam' makin' a steer†
To Catherine's house, &c.
The laird o' Strathallan rode up to the hallan‡
O' Catherine's house, &c.

The laird o' Saint Ringans cam' peelin' his onions
To Catherine's house, &c.
The laird o' Boquhan was ower late, and he ran
To Catherine's house, &c.
The laird o' Doune fell and crackit his croun§
At Catherine's house, &c.
The Provost o' Stirlin' sat by the lum skirlin'‖
In Catherine's house, &c.

Returning to anecdotes of the male sex.—"How is it," asked an Edinburgh D.D. of a player, "that you have crowded houses to hear your fiction, while I can only command a small congregation to hear the most important truths?" "Because," said the player, "you tell truth as if it were fiction, while I tell fiction as if it were truth."

Bauchie Lee, the boatman at Dalserf Ferry, on the Clyde, was somewhat reputed for his ready sayings and curious expedients. Bauchie was in the habit of receiving from the Earl of Hyndford a shilling for rowing him across, instead of one penny, the usual fare. One day the Earl walked off without tendering his wonted gratuity. As his lordship had proceeded to some distance, Bauchie called out, "My lord, if you have lost your purse, recollect it has not been in my boat."

The field of Bannockburn was formerly pointed out

* Alms. † Disturbance. ‡ Door step.
§ Abraised his temples. ‖ The chimney singing vociferously.

to visitors by a nailer who resided on the spot. An English gentleman, much pleased with his intelligent description, offered him half-a-crown. "Pit it back, sir," said the nailer, "your countrymen have already paid dearly enough for seeing Bannockburn."

A stout English gentleman, a visitor at a fashionable watering-place on the west coast, was in the habit of conversing familiarly with Donald Fraser, a character of the place, who took delight in talking boastfully of his great relations. One day, as the gentleman was seated at the door of his lodging, Donald came up driving a fat boar. "One of your great relations, I suppose, you have got with you, Donald?" said the gentleman. "No," quietly retorted Donald, surveying the proportions of his interlocutor, "no relation whatever, but just an acquaintance like yoursel."

The celebrated Mr Fletcher of Saltoun was possessed of a very irritable temper. His butler intimated his intention of seeking another place, when Mr Fletcher proceeded gently to urge him to continue in his service. "I cannot bear your temper, sir," said the butler. "I am passionate, I confess," said Mr Fletcher, "but my passion is no sooner on than it is off." "Yes," rejoined the butler, "but then it's no sooner off than it's on again!"

A country laird heard that his man-servant had, in the neighbouring village, been denouncing him as "no gentleman." The servant pled not guilty to the charge; adding emphatically, that when he went to the village he "aye kept his thochts to himsel."

After the Reform Bill of 1831 had passed, the Conservative candidate for the representation of Fife, in his canvass, visited a radical tailor in Markinch. The would-be member seemed in high spirits, saluting the

tailor with much frankness. "What can I do for you? or rather what can you do for me? Can you make me a new coat?" "Your coat's no so bad," said the tailor, "only it would need to be turned." The candidate next lifted a German flute which lay beside the tailor. "Oh you're a musician, I see." "I keep a bit thing there to blow awa the Tories—that's a'."

The following anecdote, at the expense of John Home, the ingenious author of "Douglas," though illustrative rather of English than Scottish humour, seems not unsuitable for these pages. We transcribe the narrative from Dr Carlyle's "Autobiography." Detailing the particulars of a tour in England, the doctor proceeds: "From Blenheim, we made the best of our way to Warwick, where, as we had been much heated, and were very dusty, we threw off our boots, and washed and dressed ourselves before we walked out. John Home would not put on his boots again; but, in clean stockings and shoes, when he was looking at himself in the glass, and prancing about the room in a truly poetical style, he turned short upon the boot-catch, who had brought in our clean boots, and finding the fellow staring at him with seeming admiration, "And am I not a pretty fellow?" said John. "Ay," says he, "sir," with half a smile. "And who do you take me for?" said John. "If you binna Johnny Dunlop, the Scotch pedlar, I dinna ken wha ye are; but your ways are vera like his."

During his political canvass at St Andrews, Mr Dempster handed five guineas to a hair-dresser for shaving him, in the belief that he would thereby secure his vote. Hearing that the professional had accepted a similar recompence for shaving his political opponent, Mr Dempster called on him in order to

remonstrate. "Troth, sir," said the barber, in explanation, "I just wanted to pleasur ye baith."

The shepherd of Mr Richard, tenant at Monedie, Perthshire, had been sent to the market of Beauly, Inverness-shire, to purchase cattle. He returned *minus* the valuable *collie* or farm-dog. In reply to his master's inquiries, he admitted that he had sold the animal; but added *naively*, "Ye needna disturb yersel, maister —he'll be back the morn!" The rogue proved right, for the dog actually did reappear on the following day, having found its way home a distance of upwards of one hundred miles.

Mr Goldie, a gentleman of fortune, having exhibited some strange eccentricities, his friends applied to have him confined as a lunatic on the verdict of a jury. Mr Goldie conducted his own defence, and concluded his address to the jurors in these words—"Thus, gentlemen, I have gone through the whole case, and it is for you to determine whether I be mad or not. If I am declared to be mad, I shall at least have the satisfaction to have it found by a verdict of my *Peers*."

A rough mode of expression and manner is not uniformly the index of ruggedness of nature. In the following instances, the absence of refinement is sufficiently striking. A Glasgow carter was met one day by a neighbour. He was shedding tears. "What's the matter, John?" said the neighbour. "Oh, Sandy! my mither's dead," sobbed the carter. "Is that a'?" rejoined the neighbour; "I was fear'd it had been your horse."

The sexton of Dunino was visited early one morning by Alexander Bell, an aged labourer. "Gude mornin', Saunders," said the sexton, "I hope ye're a' weel." "Thank ye," said old Saunders, "we 're a' weel—only

the wife's dead!" Saunders had lost his wife the previous evening.

The Rev. Mr G. of Stirling remarked to one of his hearers that he had heard he was about to be married for the third time. The reverend gentleman added, "They say, John, you 're getting money with her; you did so on the two last occasions; you 'll get quite rich by the wives." "Deed, sir," quietly responded John, "what wi' bringin' them in and puttin' them out, there's nae muckle made o' them."

A clergyman in Glasgow used to relate the following:—In marrying a couple he asked the bride, in the usual form of the Presbyterian Church, whether she would be "a loving, faithful, and obedient wife." The bride promptly replied that she would promise to be loving and faithful, but would not venture on a pledge of uniform obedience. The minister paused and demurred. "Just say awa, sir," ejaculated the bridegroom, "she has promised to be lovin' and faithfu'; an' foul fa' thae fingers," raising his fist, "gin she's no obedient!"

A similar narrative, in which the bride proved to be the prevailing party, was told by the Rev. Dr Maclean, of the Gorbals, Glasgow. The reverend doctor, in marrying a couple, failed to obtain any indication from the bridegroom as to whether he would accept the bride as his helpmate. After a considerable pause, the bride, indignant at the stolidity of her intended husband, pushed down his head with her hand, at the same time addressing him aloud, "Canna ye boo,* ye brute!"

A Paisley bride, who was being united to a stolid husband, was more considerate in her expressions. The bridegroom having given no response to the question, though often repeated by the minister, "Do you

* Bow,

take this woman to be your married wife?" the bride broke in, "Deed does he, sir; he promises a' that ye require!"

Mr Alan Ker, of Greenock, was a person of much shrewdness, which he united with a singular simplicity in expressing his sentiments. A person came to him in great perplexity. His daughter was desirous of marrying a man whom he did not choose to have as his son-in-law. What was he to do, for the pair were quite determined? Mr Ker ascertained by a few pointed questions that their decision had been most unequivocally announced, and that the young man, though distasteful to the bride's father, was a respectable person. "Well, then," said he, giving his deliverance, "just let them marry, or they 'll do 't in spite of ye; for if ye put her in a barrel, he 'll kiss her thro' the bung."

The late Duke of Montrose, after reviewing a body of Greenock volunteers, complimented their commanding officer very highly, saying he was quite surprised at the steadiness of his men. "Indeed, my lord duke," replied the worthy major, "I'm very much surprised at it mysel, for I don't think half a dizzen o' them ever saw a duke afore."

Anecdotes of simplicity are numerous. The two following are transcribed from Dr Hanna's "Memoirs of Dr Thomas Chalmers:"—

A party of ministers had met at the manse, (Kilconquhar, then occupied by Dr John Chalmers, granduncle of the celebrated divine,) where a number of them were to remain all night, and among the rest Mr Gray, against whom some slight pique, on account of a real or assumed literary superiority, was entertained. The question as to the relative power of the imagination and the senses was raised, and the argument rose high. Mr Gray alone taking the side of the imagina-

tion. The combatants parted for the night; Mr Gray, by retiring first, giving his adversaries the opportunity of concocting the trick by which they made his own act contradict his argument. It was the custom at that time to wear wigs, which were given to a servant at night to be powdered for the next day. When Mr Gray, with his freshly-powdered wig, came down next morning to the breakfast-room, he found it unoccupied. It was not long till one of his brethren joined him, who, on approaching, gave very distinct but not very agreeable indications that a most offensive odour was issuing from the wig. Trying his own senses, Mr Gray could detect nothing amiss, and laughed at his friend for his folly. Now, however, a second friend came in, who declared, immediately on entering, that there was a very strong smell of brimstone in the room, and traced it at once and unhesitatingly to the wig. The laugh subsided; but still, after a second trial, Mr Gray could find nothing amiss. But a third friend came in, and a fourth, and a fifth, all fixing the alleged offence upon the wig, till his own senses overcome at last, and the victory given to his adversaries, Mr Gray flung the harmless wig away, exclaiming, "Why, the fellow *has* put brimstone on the wig!"

"Upon one occasion at Kilmany," writes Dr Hanna, "Mr Duncan,* who had no great relish for his friend's beverage, (an infusion of burnt rye, which Chalmers insisted was equal to the best Mocha coffee,) so stoutly denied this position, that Mr Chalmers declared that the next time he came to Dundee he would subject the matter in Mr Duncan's own presence to an *experimentum crucis*, and triumphantly vindicate his own invention. The time for the experiment soon arrived.

* Subsequently Professor of Mathematics in the University of St Andrews.

Mr Chalmers appeared in Dundee, bringing with him a quantity of rye coffee, as he called it, of his best manufacture. The trial between it and its rival was made in Dr Ramsay's, to whose sister the performance of the important experiment had been committed. It was agreed that a select company of connoisseurs should assemble; that Miss Ramsay should furnish each, first with a cup of her best Mocha coffee, and then with a cup of the 'Genuine Kilmany;' that each guest should announce his opinion, and that by the verdict of the majority the question of their respective merit should be decided. In the meantime, however, before the trial commenced, Miss Ramsay received certain private instructions, upon which she acted. In due time the company assembled. The coffee being handed round, met with general approbation. The second cup was next presented; by one after another an adverse verdict was pronounced, till it came at last to Mr Duncan, who emphatically exclaimed, 'Much inferior—*very much inferior!*' Mr Chalmers burst into laughter, as he replied, 'It's your own Mocha coffee; the second cup is just the same article as the first.'"

Dr Carlyle mentions among his early acquaintances a Mr James Purdie, rector of the grammar-school at Glasgow, "who," he says, "had not much to recommend him but grammar." "Having been asked to see," the doctor continues, "a famous comet that appeared this winter or the following, through Professor Dick's telescope, which was the best in the college at that time; when Mr Purdie retired from taking his view of it, he turned to Mr Simson* and said, 'Mr Robert, I believe it is *hic* or *hæc cometa*, a comet.' To

* Mr Robert Simson was Professor of Mathematics in Glasgow University.

settle the gender of the Latin was all he thought of this great and uncommon phenomenon of nature."

In the lobby of an inn at the head of Loch Suinart, the following inscription was painted on the wall in conspicuous letters: "No person will get credit for whisky in this house but those that pay money down."

A Highlandman, after the battle of Prestonpans, was stripping the body of an officer, when a comrade begged a share of the plunder. "Na, na," said Donald, "you can kill a shentleman to yoursel."

Three farmers sat down to pass an evening. It was arranged that each should express a wish. One of the wishes was sufficiently characteristic: "I wish," said the yeoman," that Black Tammas (the hill behind his house) was a haggis, an' that I was in the middle o' him wi' a horn spoon."

The Earl of Buchan was a zealous collector of antiquities. His collection was subsequently sold by auction. Sir Walter Scott used to relate that he witnessed the following scene: A worthy farmer and his wife were present at the sale, and were evidently in quest of some culinary utensils. A Roman *patera* was put up and sold at ten guineas. There was a more capacious vessel, of a similar description, on which the worthy couple had had an eye. The good woman seeing the former realise so large a price, exclaimed to her husband, "If the parritch pan brings ten guineas, what will the kail pot bring! Let 's awa hame, John."

The greatest compliment ever paid to the pathos of Christian eloquence was in the simple saying of a country wife. The late Rev. Dr Andrew Carstairs, minister of Anstruther-Wester, was reputed for the excellence of his communion addresses. He was in the habit of exhorting tables at the celebration of the communion at Dunino. The parish minister asked

an elderly widow as to her opinion of the doctor's services. "'Deed, sir," said the widow, "I just begin to greet* whan Dr Carstairs begins to speak, for I ken I'm sure he'll mak me greet before he's dune."

A country woman was proceeding to church along a miry road, when she was recommended by a neighbour pedestrian to be more particular in selecting her steps. "'Deed, I just tak it straught on, woman," was the reply; "ye ken we canna buy the Word owre dear."

Some years ago, a member of the Secession Church, from the vicinity of Glasgow, was visiting a friend in the parish of Kippen. During the visit, the Rev. Mr Anderson, the late parochial incumbent, had been preaching on doctrinal subjects. "Well, what do you think of our minister?" inquired the host of his Secession friend. "Very much," was the answer; "he's a graund minister, and a terrible enemy to guid warks!" The visitor intended to express his belief that Mr Anderson was not a legal but a gospel minister.

A Highland drover who happened to be at Dumfries, was much outraged to find one of the natives whistling a tune on Sunday morning. Having expressed his indignation to one of the bystanders, who agreed with him in condemning the levity, he was asked by this party if there were no bad practices in the Highlands. The drover was at a loss to remember. "Don't they take rather much whisky," persisted the bystander, "and you know that is a very bad thing." "Very bad," responded Donald, "and especially bad whisky."

Mr R. H. Story relates the following, illustrative of the practices of illicit distillation in Roseneath parish during the incumbency of his father's predecessor:—

* Weep.

"The smuggler felt no delicacy and no apprehension in bringing to the manse a gallon or two which he could recommend as 'nane o' your clatty muckle-still whisky, but a wee drap that I hae just made mysel;' and in the old doctor's days he found most probably a ready purchaser. 'I pay the duty on the maut,' said one man in reply to Mr S.'s remonstrances; 'I alloo nae sweerin' at the still, and everything's dane dacently and in order. I canna see any harm in't.'"

The late Rev. Dr John Thomson of Markinch had been preaching on the moral depravity of man, and the evils of licentiousness. Returning to the manse through the churchyard, he overheard the following colloquy between Johnny Spittal and Davie Thomson, two of his more errant parishioners: "Weel, Davie, did ye hear a' yon?" "'Deed did I, Johnny, man." "An' what thocht ye o't a', Davie?" "'Deed, Johnny, man, if he hadna been an awfu' chield himsel, he wadna kent sae weel aboot it."

A late minister of Peebles had been discoursing on the sin of falsehood, and had portrayed the unhallowed consequences of indulging in the practice. A small trader in the place, whose conscience had been for the moment aroused, exclaimed to a neighbour on going home, "The minister needna hae been sae hard, for there's plenty o' leers in Peebles besides me!"

Mr R. H. Story, minister of Roseneath, describing the veneration with which the ducal house of Argyll was regarded in Roseneath parish, relates that one of the parishioners, in detailing to his Grace's factor some grievances he had sustained from a neighbour, added, "And mair than that, he had the impiddence to strike me in the presence o' his Grace's horse."

The late Rev. Mr Logan, Secession clergyman at St Ninian's, was visiting ministerially at a small hamlet

in a remote part of his parochial district. By an unw toward movement of his arm, he upset a wine-glass placed on the table before him by the *gudewife* of one of the cottages. "Eh, keep me!" exclaimed the concerned matron, "ye've broken Nanny M'Tippy's glass, an' ye'll no get anither drap the day, for it was the only glass i' the raw."

Adam Smith, author of the "Wealth of Nations," when engaged in the composition of that great work, was unusually absent. He was one day muttering to himself, in passing close to a couple of fishwomen who were sitting by their stalls. Both took him for a madman at large, one remarking to the other in a pathetic tone, "Hech, an' he's weel pat on tae."

An English gentlewoman, in course of a tour in Scotland, had rested at a respectable inn in a country village. On being shown to her bed-room by the rustic chambermaid, she was addressed thus: "Would you like to have a het crock in your bed this cauld night, mem?" "A what?" said the lady. "A pig,* mem. Shall I put a pig in your bed to keep you warm?" "Leave the room, young woman! Your mistress shall hear of your insolence." "No offence I hope, mem. It was my mistress bid me ask: and I'm sure she meant it in kindness." The lady looked the girl in the face, and satisfied that no insult was intended, said, in a milder tone, "Is it common in this country, my girl, for ladies to have pigs in their beds?" "And gentlemen hae them too, mem, when the weather's cauld." "But you would not, surely, put the pig between the sheets!" "If you please, mem, it will do maist good there." "Between the sheets! It would dirty them, girl. I could never sleep with a pig between the sheets." "Never fear,

* Earthenware jar.

mem! You'll sleep far mair comfortable. I'll steek* the mouth o't tightly, and tie it up in a poke."† "Do you sleep with a pig *yourself* in cold weather?" "No, mem. Pigs are only for gentles that lie on feather beds: I sleep on *cauf*‡ with my neighbour lass." "Calf! Do you sleep with a calf between you?" said the Cockney lady. "No, mem, you're jokin' now," said Grizzy, with a broad grin, "we, lie on the tap o't!"

The late Dr L—— of G—— was in the habit of preaching highly metaphysical discourses, yet was fortunate in possessing much popularity among the humbler and less educated classes. "Do you really understand the doctor?" inquired a gentleman of his housemaid, with whom the minister was a special favourite. "God forbid that I should understand him," was the immediate reply.

The simplicity of a rural courtship was never better illustrated than by the following anecdote:—"I'm gaun to be marrit,§ Peggy," said a hind to a servant lass whom he had been in the habit of visiting. "Ay, are ye? And to whom, gin I may be allowed to speir?"‖ "To yersel, Peggy." "Are ye?" said Peggy; "I wish I had kenn'd¶ sooner."

A young lady who possessed no remarkable personal attraction, but was somewhat susceptible, remarked, after meeting a reverend gentleman of popular talent, "I hope Mr —— will not ask me, for I should feel so much to refuse him."

A miner in Alloa waited on the session clerk with the request that he might be proclaimed in the parish church in order to marriage. The official explained that the dues were as follows: One guinea if the proclamation was completed in one day, half a guinea if

* Shut. † Bag. ‡ Chaff. § Married. ‖ Ask. ¶ Known.

continued for two Sabbaths, and seven shillings and sixpence should the proclamation be made on three Sabbaths. "So it 's aye the less, I see," said the miner; "then ye may just cry on till ye pay yersel."

A sailor's wife at Portpatrick had just received intelligence that her husband had perished at sea. She was visited by a neighbour, who sympathised with her on her loss, and expressed a fear that she would be poorly off. "'Deed will I," said the widow; "but he did all he could for me—he 's saved me the expense of his buryin'."

A person in the vicinity of Perth was working in his garden when his wife returned from a visit to the city. "Ye 're busy, gudeman." "Ou ay, gudewife." "I hae been in Perth," proceeded she, "an' I hae lost a note. But dinna be angry, gudeman; rather let 's be thankfu' that we had ane to lose."

Prior to the period of steam navigation, the Forth was crossed by a ferry-boat which plied between Leith and Kinghorn. A person on board the vessel during a stormy passage was in a condition of the utmost apprehension. A fellow-passenger called on him to trust in Providence. "So I do," was the reply; "but if once I get to shore, I shall next time be independent, by takin' the brig o' Stirlin'."

"Do you hear," said a lady to a female friend in the country, "that Mr Black has committed suicide?" "Dear me!" was the reply; "and what d' ye think will be done to him for 't?"

A clergyman happened to call on the Rev. Mr M. He found his friend in the garden, along with all the members of his family, perched on the branches of a large apple-tree. The reverend gentleman exclaimed to his visitor that he was giving his family a change of air.

The Rev. Dr Thomas Chalmers wrote very illegibly. When minister of Kilmany, he despatched letters weekly to his parents at Anstruther. There was generally experienced considerable difficulty in deciphering his communications; but one letter proved an absolute puzzle. It was at length ruled by the divine's mother that the letter should be laid aside, "that Tam, when he cam', might read it himsel."

A minister of a dissenting congregation in a populous town in Renfrewshire had been accused at a meeting of session by some of the elders of neglecting the duties of the pastorate. One member of the eldership was especially severe in his censures. For some time the reverend incumbent silently submitted to the attack. But, after it had proceeded to an intolerable extent, he passionately exclaimed, "Am I a Briareus?" On his way home the elder who had been loudest in his reproof met a friend, whom he thus addressed—"Hech, sirs! what 's to become o' our puir minister noo? Waes me, but he 's gane clean daft,* d' ye ken; he actually speir'd at me the nicht, ay, in amang a' the elders and deacons too, if I thocht he was a *brier bush*. Man, if he had just held his tongue, I wad ne'er hae kent there was muckle wrang wi' him."

Two shoemakers opposed each other in business. One of them put up a flashy signboard, intimating the superior quality of his wares. The other, by way of showing his contempt for his neighbour's upsetting procedure, added to the usual announcement, "Mens conscia recti." The first resolved to proceed a step further, and so copied the inscription, adding, "and women's too."

"Signboards," writes Dr Barclay, "have been a prolific source of interest and amusement. The affix of

* Crazed.

A as the abridgment of Archibald, Alexander, or Andrew, has often made a complete sentence of ambiguous import. In more than one instance there has been announced, 'A Black Smith.' For a long time the sign above the door of a respectable baker in Glasgow had the rather forbidding words, 'A Sclanders Baker.' For many years the uppermost shop in the Stockwell Street of Glasgow was a candle shop, with the classic announcement, 'A Chilles Candlemaker.' The notion of the Grecian hero having taken to dip long tens was a sad token of national degeneracy. Similar to this is a signboard, which is still to be seen in a northern city, 'T Roy Butcher.' There is said to have been much butchery at Troy, but no classical scholar would ever have viewed it as a butcher's shop. In another town there appears 'C Laws Fishdealer,' a very proper name for a merchant in lobsters and shell-fish. We have seen 'A Mustard' keeping a grocer's shop, and 'Irons' selling soft goods. Sometimes the interjection of the number of a shop reads marvellously, as, 'John Stirling & 124 Sons General Merchants.' The military fever is now very prevalent, as is seen by the oft-repeated announcement of 'General Grocer,' 'General Merchant,' and the whole staff of *pacific* Generals. There are often curious instances of poetically-constructed signboards, such as one in Glasgow —'John Girvan, Sweep, Slater, & Pig-putter-on.' Grammar is sometimes at fault, as in the case of one we have often seen in Bell's Wynd, Glasgow, 'John Hannah, Weaving *Agent* and Pie *House*.' There was once a close in the Gallowgate of Glasgow seemingly of great extent, for we have read at its entry the ominous words, 'Messages *run down this close* at one penny *the mile*.'"

When the Rev. Dr B. obtained the honorary degree

of doctor of divinity, a farmer in the parish took an early opportunity of stating the news to his shepherd, with whom the minister was a particular favourite. "You 'll be glad to hear, John, that the university of St Andrews has conferred on our minister a doctor's degree." "I am noways surprised at that," said the shepherd; "mair than twenty years syne he cured my wife o' a colic. He should have been made a doctor lang syne!"

The late distinguished Rev. Dr Duncan of Ruthwell began early in the century a course of week-day scientific lectures in his parish, and which is understood to have been the first attempt at the establishment of mechanics' institutes in Scotland. The doctor had one evening stated and illustrated the discovery of Copernicus respecting the double motion of the earth. The lecture called forth severe strictures in regard to the doctor's orthodoxy, and an old cobbler undertook to prove not only that he was theologically unsound, but scientifically erroneous. He *proved* the latter by appealing to the fact, that he had been in the habit of suspending his dried fish on a pin outside his door every evening, and that he had uniformly found them in precisely the same position next morning, which he maintained would not have happened "had the earth been fleein' roun' like a ba'." The cobbler's reasoning was deemed conclusive, and Dr Duncan was obliged to discontinue his lectures.

During a severe storm which occurred at night, the wife of a hill farmer in Roxburghshire was awakened by the crashing sound produced by the fall of a tree. She awoke her husband with the exclamation, "Get up, gudeman, for sure eneuch this is the last day!" "Lie still, woman," replied her impatient lord: "wha ever heard o' the last day comin' i' the middle o' the nicht?"

An eloquent preacher was discoursing in a tent. His discourse was so extremely pathetic that the audience, with the exception of a single person, was moved to tears. The stolid individual, on being asked how he could listen to the discourse unmoved, made answer, "Oh, I dinna belong to this parish."

A Dumfriesshire weaver, zealous for becoming forms of speech, remarked to a neighbour, in a conversation about graveyards, "An' I'm spared, I'll be buried in Kirkosal."

Sir Walter Scott was in one of his walks leaning on the arm of his faithful attendant Tom Purdie. Tom said, "Them are fine novels of yours, Sir Walter; they are juist invaluable to me." "I am glad to hear it, Tom." "Yes, sir; for when I have been out all day hard at work, and come hame vera tired, and tak up one o' your novels, I'm asleep directly."

Shortly after the commencement of the war with France, a duty was imposed on tallow. A goodwife in Greenock asked her chandler the reason of the price of her candles being raised. "It 's owing to the war," said the shopkeeper. "The war," replied the goodwife, "is it possible they 're gaun to fecht wi' caunil licht?"

The late Rev. P. B. was remarkably plain-looking. Subsequent to his delivering his first sermon, a female belonging to the congregation remarked, "Atweel he hasna a very divertin' coontenance." The woman evidently meant that his aspect was the reverse of pleasing.

The late Rev. Mr Ramsay of Alyth was visiting an old woman, one of his parishioners, who was especially zealous in her attachment to the Established Church. She informed him that she had completely silenced the wife of a neighbouring cottager who was advocat-

ing the cause of dissent, by showing her the passage, Acts xvi. 5, "And so were the churches *established*."

During a commercial crisis, when there was a general rush upon the banks for payment of deposits, a rustic in Aberdeenshire, who possessed £100 in bank, hearing of the scramble, hastened to town, and presenting his deposit-receipt at the bank office, demanded payment. It was tendered in the notes of the bank. Bundling up the notes, he was heard to exclaim, as he retired, "Ye may break noo when ye like."

A Paisley operative, hailing a supposed acquaintance on the deck of a steamer from the harbour at Greenock, called out, "Holloa, Jock, is that you or your brither?"

The Rev. Dr Guthrie tells an anecdote of an old beggar, accomplished in his vocation, who used to lament over the degeneracy of the age, saying, "that men now-a-days didna ken hoo to beg; that Kelso weel begget was worth fifteen shillings ony day."

There are singular modes of expression peculiar to particular districts. The language was not deemed extravagant by the hearers, when the late Rev. Walter Traill, of Lady parish, Sanday, Orkney, entreated in public prayer for his parish, thus: "Dinna forget the puir island o' Sanday." Nor were feelings of the ludicrous excited when the late Rev. John Gerard of South Ronaldshay, Orkney, at the presbyterial examination of Kirkwall school, prayed that all good influences might "cleave to the children's hearts *like butter to bere bannocks*."

There was more shrewdness than simplicity expressed in the prayer of the Alloa elder, who daily presented the petition at his family devotions, "Preserve our souls from the devil, our bodies from the doctor, and our purses from the lawyer."

It is a common mode of inquiry in Annandale, when a death is reported, "Did he die a natural death, or was the doctor sent for?" The meaning obviously being, "Was the death sudden or the reverse?"

Wilson Street, Glasgow, is well known as the place of rendezvous for carters. One of these worthies looking rather dilapidated one morning, accosted a friend, and related to him his late experiences of a neighbouring "public." "Eh, Jock! I've found oot siccan a hoose! there's no a place like it in a' Glasgow. I got three clytes* last nicht, an' have a head like to rive† this mornin', and a' for fourpence."

An old cobbler in St Andrews was unexpectedly bequeathed £20 by a distant relative. The family were in circumstances of penury, and the best mode of investing the legacy became a matter of anxious discussion. The cobbler was anxious that it should be melted into liquor for his own special gratification, but the "gudewife" strongly insisted that she ought likewise to have a share in the enjoyment of the bequest. The result was that the entire amount was expended in the purchase of *shortbread*‡ on which the family feasted for a course of weeks. Maguire, the Ayr fiddler (see p. 120), on hearing of the good fortune which had attended his daughter, procured a bottle of brandy and a loaf of sugar, and, pouring the brandy into a hole scooped out of the bottom of the loaf, he proceeded with his wife to sup the liquor.

There is a considerable field of anecdote in the department of *slips*. It was arranged among the shopkeepers at Borrowstounness that the bank holiday of Good Friday should not be observed, on account of the weekly market being held on that day of the week, but that the Monday following should be kept in its

* Falls. † Split. ‡ Peculiar kind of cake, baked with butter.

stead. The bank agent accordingly posted up the following intimation: "As Good Friday falls on Monday this year, Monday will be kept as a holiday."

A sheriff-clerk of Dundee was attending a funeral. "How old was our departed friend?" he inquired of a relative of the deceased. "Very old," was the reply; "I believe he was in his eighty-seventh year." "Not so very old," exclaimed the lawyer; "if my father had been alive, he had been 112!"

Mr Dempster of Dunnichen was perpetual preses of "The Lunan and Viney Water Farming Society." At the annual dinner one season, Mr Dempster, instead of sharing, as usual, the contents of the punch-bowl, was drinking cold water—a circumstance which was remarked by a farmer who was seated near him. Mr Dempster explained that his abstemiousness arose from his being an *invalid*. At the next yearly festival, Mr Dempster's health being restored, he was able, as usual, to join in the punch-bowl; but his farmer friend of the previous occasion was unusually sparing in his potations. "Why are you not taking off your glass, Mr ——?" said the preses to him. "Ye maun excuse me, sir," was the reply, "for I'm an infidel."

A Paisley publican was complaining of his servant maid that she could never be found when required. "She 'll gang oot o' the house," said he, "twenty times for ance she 'll come in."

The use of learned phrases by persons who do not thoroughly comprehend their meaning is a fruitful source of the ludicrous. "I don't know him," said a Glasgow magnate, in speaking of a less prosperous citizen. "I believe he is a good enough fellow in his way, but he is not of the *hong-kong*." The opulent gentleman probably intended to use the words *haut ton*.

A gentleman whose early education had been ne-

glected was asked by a lady in regard to the state of his wife's health. "I regret to say, ma'am," was the reply, "she is far from well; she has got aurora borealis in her face." The gentleman meant erysipelas.

"It's a graund spoot,"* remarked a native of Fifeshire to Dr Hamilton, at Niagara, as he surveyed the grandeur of that stupendous cataract.

The Rev. Mr Arthur, a clergyman in Glasgow, was, during the course of his parochial visitations, informed by a plain woman, a parishioner, that a neighbour's child "was troubled with the mosquitoes," (bronchitis.)

"Where is your son James?" inquired an old acquaintance of a widow lady in Roxburghshire. "He 's gone to Galashiels," said the lady, "to be a malefactor," (manufacturer.)

From an evening party at Dundee the Misses ——, sisters, were accompanied to their residence by two young gentlemen, who, according to usage, paid their respects on the following day. Having experienced considerable fatigue at the party, the ladies requested their aged mother to inform visitors that they were *indisposed*. This expression was novel to the worthy matron, and was readily forgotten. She informed the young gentlemen, in reply to their inquiries, that the misses were *deceased*. "Deceased!" exclaimed both the gentlemen at once, utterly appalled. "Deceased, do you say? and both of them too!" "Both," replied the mother. The melancholy tidings spread over the place; and the astonishment of the public may be imagined when the young ladies were next day seen enjoying their usual walk. The origin of the rumour was explained, but the poor Misses —— were afterwards recognised as *the deceased ladies*.

The wife of a Buckhaven fisherman, who had been

* Spout of water.

brought to bed of a son, instructed her husband, who was to proceed to the minister to arrange about the baptism, not to speak about the "bairn," which was a vulgarism, but to ask the reverend gentleman "to come down in the e'ening and baptize the infant." The fisherman proceeded on his errand, but ere he reached the manse forgot the new-fangled word taught him by his spouse. The minister had heard of the addition to his household, and tendered his congratulations. "Is it a laddie or a lassie, David?" added the minister. "It 's neither of them, sir," said David; "I'm no sure, but I think the wife ca'd it an elephant."

Mr Peabody, an American merchant, has given, as is well known, £250,000, in two donations, towards erecting improved dwelling-houses for the working-classes in London. On this circumstance being detailed by a Scotsman to his friend in the following terms: "That was a noble act of Mr Peabody;" the friend responded, "Eh, man, ye 're mista'en; he 's no a Peabody,—he 's a bien* body."

The late Rev. Dr Thomas Gillespie of Cults had employed a joiner to enclose with a small fence a sun-dial which he had erected in his garden. When the joiner's account was rendered, it was found to read thus: "To railin' in the Deil, 1s. 6d."—The account of a veterinary surgeon against a country laird was alike peculiar: "To curing your honour's mare till she died, £11."

An anecdote relating to the late Principal Taylor of the university of Glasgow is sufficiently ludicrous. A noble lord had been on a visit to Glasgow, and wishing a suit of clothes for a special purpose, requested the waiter of his hotel to send for the principal tailor in the city. In a short time a venerable-looking per-

* Well to do, from the French word *bien*.

son was ushered into his lordship's presence. "Are you the principal tailor here?" said his lordship. "I am at your service," replied the visitor. His lordship proceeded to explain that he was desirous of procuring a well-made suit of black clothes. "Ah," said the visitor, "I see there has been a mistake; you had sent for a principal tailor, and your message has been misunderstood. I am Dr Taylor, Principal of the University."

Some remarks by children and young persons are not unworthy of preservation. A late Earl of Eglinton expressly forbade boys to climb the trees upon his grounds. Some boys had violated the injunction, and were surprised by the earl. They contrived to escape, save one, who, in his anxiety to elude detection, ascended to the topmost branches of a tree. The earl discovered him, and desired him to come down. The boy said he feared that he would beat him. "Upon my honour," said the earl, "I won't hurt you if you will come down." "I dinna ken what ye mean by yer honour," said the boy, "but if you'll say as sure as death, I'll come doon." It is believed the earl complied with the condition.

A noble lord, who was extremely vain and very parsimonious, sold the produce of his dairy and orchard to the peasantry in his neighbourhood. Meeting one day a little girl, the daughter of a cottager, carrying a milk pipkin, his lordship kissed her, and said, "My dear, you can tell your grandchildren that you once received a kiss from the Earl of ——." The girl, looking archly into his lordship's face, exclaimed, "But ye took the penny for the milk, though!"

Lord Kames was fond of little adventures. On one occasion, when he had been officiating as a judge at the Perth circuit, he proceeded to examine the bridge which shortly before had been thrown across the Tay.

His lordship was inspecting a board inscribed with the rates of pontage, when a smart-looking boy came up. "Can you tell me, laddie," said his lordship, "what they charge for an ass crossing the brig?" "Gang across an' they'll tell ye," was the youth's reply.

"Why don't you take off your bonnet when I pass?" said Mr Stirling, an important landowner, to the small son of a cottager who was proceeding to the mansion-house bearing a couple of fowls in each hand. "An' ye'll haud* the hens," said the boy, "I'll tak aff my bannet."

When the venerable Principal Baird introduced the Assembly schools into the remote Highlands, where, before the schoolmaster was unknown, many interesting scenes were witnessed in these seminaries. The worthy Principal used to relate, that in visiting one of these newly-erected schools, whilst a class was reading and spelling from the New Testament, a red-headed urchin set up a yell worthy of a descendant of Ossian. The Principal kindly asked the young Gael the cause of his lamentation. He was astounded with the sobbing reply: "I hae trapped† my grandfather in spelling *synagogue*, and he winna let me abune‡ him."

The Rev. J—— M——, incumbent of a parish in Lanarkshire, relates the following anecdote at his own expense:—The reverend gentleman is short in stature, and has the misfortune to be lame in one of his limbs. In the course of a pastoral visitation in a former parish, he called at the house of a small farmer who happened to be in the fields. One of the family, a young lad, asked him to remain, as his father was expected home very shortly. The youth was ignorant as to the person of the visitor, but proceeded to interest him in the

* Hold. † Tripped—got the better of. ‡ Above.

various concerns connected with the farm homestead. Showing him the piggery, the youth remarked as to the thriving nature of a young litter of pigs. "Do ye see that ane," said he, "wi' the black patch on his back, fechtin' and scoorin' aboot like a hero; that's Garibaldi. Look at yon ane wi' his snoot in the air and his tail like a corkscrew turned upside doon; that's Palmerston; and, man, dae ye see that big-headed, scranky, bow-legged fellow hirplin'* about there; that's M——, of the Hie." The youth was not a little taken by surprise and confounded when his father came up and addressed his companion as Mr M——, the individual whose appearance he had been so freely criticising.

A young baronet, a visitor at the mansion of B., and on terms of intimacy with the family, had attempted to kiss one of the young ladies in a shady part of the lawn. The lady offered some resistance, and the scene did not pass unobserved. A girl of eight, the daughter of the gatekeeper, rushed into her mother's cottage, exclaiming, "Come, mither, come awa out, for Sir Thomas is worrying Miss Betsy!"

* Halting.

CHAPTER VIII.

GRAVESTONE INSCRIPTIONS.

THE country churchyard in Scotland is the most neglected spot in the district. Surrounding the parish church, it is visited weekly by a large portion of the population; yet it remains from age to age in a condition of positive loathsomeness. The old tombstones are strewn about in every variety of form, are buried in the soil, or broken in pieces. Corners and hollows are filled with fragments of bones and coffins, and the entire surface is a place of hillocks. Yet, wretched as are its aspects, the old Scottish churchyard supplies, on its tottering tombs and shattered gravestones, many quaint and curious epitaphs, interesting alike to the antiquary and the psychologist—the student of history and the man of thought. In the burial-ground of Old Greyfriars', Edinburgh, the tomb of Arthur, sixth and last Lord Balmerino, who suffered decapitation in 1746 for his adherence to the cause of Prince Charles Edward, is thus inscribed:—

> "Here lies a baron bold; take care;
> There may be treason in a tear.
> And yet my Arthur may find room,
> Where greater folks don't always come."

Lord Balmerino's tomb was erected by his widow, who, it will be observed, indulges in a sneer at the expense of the reigning family.

James Murray, a cadet of the house of Philiphaugh, who died in 1649, is interred in the same place of tombs. His honours are depicted in a Latin epitaph, thus translated by the author* of the "Theater of Mortality:"—

"Stay, passenger, and shed a tear,
For good James Murray lieth here;
He was of Philip Haugh descended,
And for his merchandise commended;
He was a man of a good life,
Marry'd Bethia Mauld to his wife.
He may thank God that e'er he got her;
She bore him three sons and a daughter.
The first he was a man of might,
For which the king made him a knight;
The second was both wise and wily,
For which the town made him a baily;
The third a factor of renown,
Both in Camphire and in this town.
His daughter was both grave and wise,
And married was to James Elise."

In the Old Greyfriars' Churchyard, a tombstone, bearing date 1649, commemorates the private and public virtues of Provost Tod:—

"Here worthy Provost Tod doth lye,
Who dy'd, and yet who did not die,
His golden name in Fame's fair roll
Claims the liferent tack of a soul.
Edinburgh in this man alone
Lost both a father and a son.
For twice three lustres that he sate,
In council, for her publick state;
For two years' care of late, which more
Availed than fifty times before;
For the great pains he then did take
T' avert the cry, Kill, burn, and sack,
Sure he deserves a tomb of jeat,
Or one of purest porphyrite;

* "An Theater of Mortality; or a Collection of Funeral Inscriptions, &c., over Scotland." First and Second Series. By Robert Monteith, M.A. 1704 and 1713, 8vo.

And every house should bring a stone
To build him a mausoleon.
But outward pomp he still did fly,
And thus in single dust would lie."

Provost Scrymgeour of Dundee, who died in 1657, had a monument reared to him by one of his sons, in the public burying-ground of that town. The commendatory Latin inscription is thus translated by Monteith:—

"Here Provost Scrymsour lies, Light of Dundee,
And to old Rome who might a Provost be,
This Piece of Ground now also doth interre
His first son William, a Probationer;
His loving wife and Son, surviving yet,
Desire that they may here interment get."

Francis Irving, Provost of Dumfries, was gathered to his fathers in 1633. On his tombstone his worth is commemorated in the following lines:—

"King James the first me bailiff made,
Dumfries oft since me provost nam'd;
God has for me ane crown reserv'd,
For king and country have I serv'd."

The vanity of human honours is depicted in a couplet inscribed on a tombstone in Inverness churchyard, in memory of John Cuthbert of Drakes, provost of that burgh, who died in 1711:—

"In Death no difference is made
Between the sceptre and the spade."

A contemporary of Provost Scrymgeour, Bailie Thomas Watson of Dundee, is likewise celebrated in a Latin epitaph, which is translated by Monteith. Bailie Watson died in 1688, and his remains were consigned to the public burying-ground.

"Doubtful if Watson die or live; here lies
The lesser Part, his better mounts the skies.
His better Part enjoys eternal Light,
His lesser Part is dead and out of sight."

Mr Inglis, town-treasurer of Selkirk, is thus commemorated on his tombstone:—

"Here lies a man without a lirk,
Who was a friend to town and kirk;
Whilst in this office he took pleasure
To manage well the public treasure."

The burgh-treasurer of Arbroath, Mr Alexander Peter, who died in 1630, has an epitaph still more flattering:—

"Such a Treasurer was not since, nor yet before,
For common work, calsais,* brigs† and schoir;‡
Of all others he did excell;
He devised our school and he hung our bell."

In the old churchyard of the Abbey of Holyrood, a tombstone sets forth the good deeds of Nicol Paterson, secretary to the Earl of Rothes, Chancellor of Scotland. Paterson died on the 14th November 1665. The following inscription is presented by Monteith:—

"To groan, sigh, sob, weep, and bemoan for him that 's gone,
Is great folly;
To rest is best in confidence
He 's gone to glory.
You see that neither youth, nor strength, nor beauty,
Can privilege one man from nature's duty;
Howe'er, let none pass by without resent,
For Death itself for his death doth repent."

The following epitaph, ludicrous to the modern reader, was doubtless intended to awaken feelings of an opposite description:—

"Here lies the Laird o' Lundie,
Sic transit gloria Mundi.".

* Causeway. † Bridges. ‡ Sewers.

There is not universally awakened, even in the immediate contemplation of the tomb, a proper and devout feeling in regard to the vanity of terrestrial dignities. In the parish churchyard of Renfrew, a tombstone bears the following pompous inscription :—

"Come, courteous reader, come and see
This tomb of great antiquity;
Three hundred years and more this stone
Has cover'd corps call'd Robertson.
And still for George, one of that race,
This tomb remains the appointed place.
Elizabeth Ritchie, his wife,
Who by connexion form'd in life,
Does jointly claim with him this place,
Designed by them for their race."

Over one of the entrances to Melrose Cathedral, the master-mason of the structure is thus celebrated :—

"John Munro sometime call'd was I,
And born in Paris certainly;
Had in keeping all mason-work
Of St Andrews, the high kirk,
Of Glasgow, Melrose, and Paslaw,
Of Niddisdale and Galloway.
I pray to God and Marie baith
To keep this haly kirk from harm and skaith."

Alexander Milne, stonecutter in Edinburgh, has, in the Greyfriars' churchyard, a tombstone inscribed with these encomiastic lines :—

"Stay, Passenger: here famous Milne doth rest,
Worthy in Egypt's marble to be drest;
What Myron or Apelles could have done,
In brass or painting, that he could in stone.
But thirty years he (blameless) liv'd; old age
He did betray, and in 's prime left this stage."

How ostentatious these monumental panegyrics compared with the following simple epitaph on the

tombstone of Alexander Thomson, in the churchyard of Lauder :—

"Here lies interr'd an honest man,
Who did this churchyard first lie in;
This monument shall make it known
That he was the first laid in this ground.
Of mason and of masonrie
He cutted stones right curiously.
To heaven we hope that he is gone,
Where Christ is the chief corner-stone."

Here are a few others in a similar strain. The epitaph of Robert Anderson, glazier in Dumfries, who died in 1792, is abundantly impressive :—

"They may write epitaphs who can,
I say, Here lies an honest man."

William Laing, "feuar in Daff," is commemorated in Innerkip churchyard by these lines :—

"Death bade this worthy man
His labours cease;
He liv'd respected,
And he rests in peace."

John Symson is thus described on a tombstone in the Cathedral burying-ground at St Andrews —

"He of Drumcarno tenant was,
And from this life to death did pass,
In credit, peace, and honestie;
An emblem of his piety."

Symson died in 1695. A modern tombstone in Kilpatrick churchyard concludes with the following :—

"For piety none did excel;
And of all the elders of the Kirk
He bore the bell."

A burgess of Dundee is thus commemorated in the *Howff*, or old burying-ground of that town :—

"Lo, here doth lye beneath this stone
The bones of ane true-hearted one,
Who liv'd well and died better,
Now sings in Heav'n, Glory for ever.'

The worthiness of a cottager in Tweedside is poetically celebrated in Dryburgh burial-ground :—

"Here lies the dust of James Barrie,
Who 's Bible loved to read ;
But now in silent grave lies he,
Nor further can proceed."

In Campbeltown churchyard, Duncan Campbell, blacksmith, who died in 1759, is made to impart these counsels on his tombstone :—

"Weep not, my wife and children dear,
I am not dead, but do sleep here ;
My debt is paid, my grave you see,
Therefore prepare to follow me."

John Stewart, sailor, interred in the burial-ground of Inverness, has his gravestone inscribed as follows :—

"Ask'st thou, Who lies within this place so narrow ?
I 'm here to-day, thou may'st be here to-morrow ;
Dust must return to dust our mother :
The soul returns to God our Father."

The following transcribed from John M'Kinnon's monument in the same interment-ground, is equally quaint and more sentimental :—

"The Life of Man 's a rolling stone,
Mov'd to and fro, and quickly gone."

The tombstone of Robert Miller and his wife Mar-

garet Aikman, in the churchyard of Stirling, with the date of 1809, bears the following inscription :—

"Our life is but a winter's day;
Some only breakfast and away,
Others to dinner stay,
And are full fed;
The oldest man but sups,
And goes to bed.
Large is his debt that lingers out the day;
He that goes soonest,
Has the least to pay."

Some inscriptions on the tombstones of venerated matrons are sufficiently quaint. The following is to be found in the churchyard of Haddington :—

"If charity commends a wife,
And providence a mother;
Grave modesty a widow's life,
You 'll na find sich another
In Haddington, as Marion Gray!
Who here does lye till Domis-day."

In Dornoch churchyard, "Margaret Halliday, spouse to David Stewart, shoemaker," who died in 1803, has her tombstone inscribed with a poetical narrative of her career :—

"For twenty years and eight I liv'd a maiden life,
And five and thirty years I was a married wife;
And in that space of time eight children I did bear
Four sons, four daughters who were lov'd most dear;
Three of that number, as the Scriptures run
Preach up the way to heaven, and hell to shun."

The following interesting inscription on the tombstone of "Margaret Scott" is transcribed from "A Select Collection of Epitaphs," published in 1759 :—

"Stop, passenger, until my life you 've read;
The living may get knowledge by the dead.
Five times five years I liv'd a virgin life;
Ten times five years I was a virtuous wife;

Ten times five years I liv'd a widow chaste;
Now, tir'd of this mortal life, I rest.
I, from my cradle to my grave, have seen
Eight mighty kings of Scotland, and a Queen.
Four times five years the commonwealth I saw:
Ten times the subjects rose against the law.
Twice did I see old prelacy pull'd down;
And twice the cloak was humbled by the gown.
An end of Stuart's race I saw: no more!
I saw my country sold for English ore.
Such desolations in my time have been;
I have an end of all perfection seen."

In the churchyard of Irvine, an epitaph on a married couple concludes thus:—

"How happy we lie
To meet in the sky."

In the burial-place of Inch-chapel, near Montrose, a small tombstone bears the following simple inscription:—

"Janet Milne, spouse to James Lurie, her Monument.
We do this for no other end
But that our Burial may be ken'd."

A very unkindly husband doubtless had composed the following, which is said to be found in the Grey-friars' churchyard, Edinburgh:—

"My wife lies here conveniently—
She is at rest and so am I."

Here is a more ambitious style of monumental inscription:—

"Here lies John Mills, who over hills
Pursued the hounds with hollow;
The leap though high, from earth to sky,
The Huntsman we must follow."

In the churchyard of West Kilbride, Thomas

Tyre, interred in 1795, has on his tomb a lengthened legend:—

"Here lie the banes of Thomas Tyre,
Who lang had drudged through dub and mire,
In carrying bundles and sik lyke,
His task performing with small fyke.
To deal his snuff Tam aye was free,
And served his friend for little fee.
His life obscure was nothing new,
Yet we must own his faults were few,
Although at Yule he supp'd a drap,
And in the kirk whiles took a nap.
True to his word in every case,
Tam scorn'd to cheat for lucre base.
Now he is gone to taste the faro
Which none but honest men will share."

In the churchyard of Alford, Aberdeenshire, a clergyman's spouse is thus commemorated:—

"Within this isle, interred betwixt those stones,
Are pious, wise, good Mary Forbes' bones;
To Balfling daughter, and of blameless life;
To Mr Gordon, pastor, here, the wife."

In Leochel parish burying-ground a couple are celebrated in these lines:—

"Here lyes Peter Milner, a sober man,
Who never us'd to curse nor ban.
Elizabeth Smith, she was his wife;
He had no other all his life.
He died in July 1784,
Aged 77, or a little more;
And she in July 1779,
Years 50 was her lifetime."

The churchyard of Pitsligo contains the following on John Brown's tombstone:—

"A wit is a feather,
A chief is a rod,
But an honest man
Is the noblest work of God."

George Ramsay, who died in 1592, is thus described in his epitaph in the churchyard of Foulden, Berwickshire :—

"Fyfe, fostering peace, me bred,
From thence the Merse me cald;
The Merse to Marsis larils * led,
To Byde his Battelis bald.
Vexed with wars and sore oppresst,
Death gave to Mars the foyle;
And now I have more quyit rest
Than in my native soyl.
Fyfe, Merse, Mars, Mort, those friendly four,
At last my days has driven o'er."

In the parish churchyard of Crichton, Mid-Lothian, the following lines celebrate a nameless deceased :—

"In memory of a brother;
And if ye dinna ken the name,
Ye'll just look at the muckle stane.
But see ye dinna pu' † the thyme,
I planted it in forty-nine."

On the south wall of Elgin Cathedral, with the date 1689, is the following inscription :—

"This world is a citie
Full of streets, &
Death the mercat,
That all men meets.
If lyfe were a thing
That monie could
Buy, the poor could
Not live, & the rich
Would not die."

An obliging lad of weak intellect at Burntisland is thus commemorated in the graveyard of that burgh :—

"His mind was weak, his body strong,
His answer ready with his song;
A memory like his few could boast;
But suddenly his life was lost."

* Laurels. † Pull.

The following, from Elie churchyard, is sufficiently simple :—

> "Here lies the corps of Agnes Scott,
> From earthly dwelling her name is blot."

Charles Grant, in Forfar burying-ground, is commemorated in like fashion :—

> "Here lies a true and honest man,
> Through labouring gain'd his bread;
> And in beneath this monument,
> His friends they laid his head."

A tailor's tombstone in the parish churchyard of St Vigean's contains these lines, under the sculptured representation of two implements of his trade:—

> "The Goose and Shears
> Do bear a part
> In witnessing to
> What was my art."

A ploughman is made thus to express himself on his gravestone in Haddington churchyard:—

> "Oft have I till'd the fertile soil,
> Which was my destined lot;
> But here beneath this towering elm
> I lie to be forgot."

In the churchyard of Kells, John Murray, gamekeeper, is thus commemorated:—

> "Ah, John, what changes since I saw you last?
> Thy fishing and thy shooting days are past.
> Bagpipes and hautboy thou canst sound no more,
> Thy nods, grimaces, winks, and pranks are o'er.
> Thy harmless, queerish, incoherent talk,
> Thy wild vivacity and trudging walk,
> Will soon be quite forgotten. Thy joys on earth—
> A snuff, a glass, riddles, and noisy mirth—
> Are vanish'd all. Yet blest, I hope, thou art,
> For in thy station well thou play'd thy part."

The widow of Robert Stobo, blacksmith in Bothwell, has inscribed her husband's tombstone with these words:—

"My sledge and hammer lies declined;
My bellows-pipe have lost its wind;
My forge's extinct; my fire's decayed;
And in the dust my vice is laid.
My coals is spent; my iron is gone;
My nails are drove; my work is done."

Who would not desire to possess the good qualities of William Sibbald, commemorated in the parish burying-ground of Kirkurd?—

"Old William Sibbald's conversation
Was a bright pattern in his station.
For moral virtuous piety
He did excel in his degree.
He never any did distress;
Nor any him by law process.
All his affairs he managed so,
That few could say they did them know.
For temperance there was few such,
Nor e'er could say he drank too much.
He helped many in their need.
He ready was the poor to feed.
And now he reaps the fruits in store
Of Heaven's joys for evermore."

One who practised the arts of the drawing-master and poet is thus celebrated in the churchyard of Kinnoull:—

"Halt for a moment,
Passenger, and read
Here Andrew dozes
In his daisied bed.
Silent his flute,
Torn off its key.
His genius scattered,
And the Muse set free."

In the churchyard of Torryburn, "John Fraser,

son to Hugh Fraser of Dalcraig," is thus quaintly celebrated:—

"Here lieth one below this stone,
Who loved to gather gear;
Yet all his life did want a wife
Of him to take the care:
He won his meat, both ear and late
Betwixt *Cleish* and *Craigflour*
And craved this stone might lie upon
Him (at his latter hour.")

Edward Aitchison, the wandering bard of Peeblesshire, has been commemorated on his tombstone at Tweedsmuir by the ingenious son of an illustrious Scotsman. The epitaph bears date March 1856.

"Here in a lonely spot the bones repose
Of one who murder'd rhyme and slaughter'd prose;
Sense he defied, and grammar set at nought;
Yet some have read his books, and even bought.

For want of art his virtues made amends;
Foes he had none, but counted many friends;
Long was he known by Teviot and by Tweed,
An aged horseman on an aged steed.

Where'er he went he found an open door,
The folks all liked him, and the bard was poor;
A ream of paper, and a pound of snuff,
Pens and his "specks," and Edward had enough;
Along life's road he jogg'd at easy pace,
Dismounted here, and found a resting-place."

Walter Coupar's monument in the old churchyard of Dundee proceeds as follows:—

"Kind Commerads! here Coupar's corpse is laid,
Walter by name, a Tayleor to his trade;
Both kynd and true and stout and honest-hearted;
Condole with me that he so soon departed.
For I avow, he never weyl'd a shear
Had better parts nor he that 's bury'd here."

Andrew Scott's epitaph in Inchchapel churchyard, near Montrose, is peculiarly pithy:—

"This honest skipper, Andrew Scott,
To all his neighbours was the cock.'

Than the following in St Andrews burying-ground, what can be simpler:—

"Here lies a ploughman, good enough,
Who gain'd his living by the plough."

In Aberlady churchyard, John Smith, the Hercules of the parish, is thus commemorated on his gravestone:—

"Here lies John Smith
Whom Death slew, for all his pith;
The starkest man in Aberlady—
God prepare and make us ready!"

James Craig is in Haddington burial-ground memorialised in these terms:—

"Hout, Atropos, hard-hearted Hag,
To cut the strength of Jamie Craig;
For had he lived a wheen mae years,
He had been owre tough for all your sheirs;
Now Jamie's deed, sua man we a',
And for his sake I'll say this sa
In Heiven Jamie be thy saul!"

An honourable baronet is celebrated in Kilsyth churchyard thus:—

"Beneath this stone here lies a man
Whose body was not full three span;
A boon companion, day and night,
Sir Thomas Henderson of Haystown, Knight."

An unknown character of low degree has in the old burying-ground of Dundee the following inscription on his tombstone;—

"Here lies a man
Com'd of Adam and Eve;
If any will climb higher,
I give him leave."

In the churchyard of Roxburgh, Peter Cairns is celebrated in respect of his wives and children :—

"Here lies Peter Cairns,
Who had three wives and nine bairns."

The celibacy of the Rev. Mr Barclay of Monifieth is thus portrayed on his monument in the parish churchyard ;—

"Of Barclay's single life if you complain,
You err ; he had for Wife the Muses nine."

Somewhere in Annandale, a tombstone, two centuries old, is said to bear the following inscription :—

"I Jockey Bell o' Braikenbrow lie under this stane,
Five of my awn sons laid it on my wame.*
I lived aw my Dayes but stirt or strife,
Was man o' my Meat and Master o' my Wife.
If you 've done better in your time than I did in mine,
Tak' the stane aff my wame, and lay it on thine."

This is sufficiently quaint, but less so than the following, which is reported to have been transcribed from a tombstone at Dumfries :—

"Here lies John Spier,
Dumfriesse Pipier.
Young John? Fy, fy!
Old John? Ay, ay!"

The immediate causes of death are seldom alluded to on tombstones. The two following epitaphs are in this respect exceptional. The first is said to be found in the churchyard of Forfar :—

"An auld chimley that doun fell
Kill'd baith his servant and himsel."

* Stomach.

The next is from a Highland graveyard :—

"Here lies interr'd a man of micht,
His name is Macom Downie;
He lost his life ae market nicht
In fa'in' aff his pownie."

Three epitaphs are subjoined, of which the composers had evidently not consulted the schoolmaster. In the churchyard of Dunino, Fifeshire, a modern tombstone is inscribed with the motto, *Mento Mori.* The omission of a syllable in the first word would lead the reader to infer that the deceased had died by the chin, *i.e.*, suffered on the gallows. In the old burial-ground of Dundee a monumental inscription runs thus: —"Here lies an honest man, named Walter Gourlay, maltman, and burgess of Dundee, who deceased 28th April 1628, of his age 46 years, with his twenty bairns: *All their heads being cut upon this stone.*" A tombstone in Dunfermline churchyard is inscribed with the following:—"Here lies Andrew Robertson, *present* Deacon and Convener of the Weavers in this burgh, who died November 1762."

The two following epitaphs, differing so essentially from the usual complimentary strain of such compositions, are transcribed from a volume of Scottish monumental inscriptions; but it is fairly to be presumed that they had no actual existence in connexion with the tombs of the noblemen to whom they relate.

On Thomas, Earl of Haddington, 1637 :—

"Here layes a Lord, who while he stood
Had matchless been had he been ——
This epitaph's a syllable short,
And ye may add a syllable to it,
But what that syllable doth import,
My defunct lord could never do it."

On William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, who died in 1640 :—

"Here lies a farmer and a miller,
A poet and a psalm-book spiller,
A purchaser by hook and crook,
A forger of the service book,
A coppersmith who did much evil,
A friend to bishops and the devil;
A vain, ambitious, flattering thing,
Late secretary for a king.
Some tragedies in verse he penn'd,
At last he made a tragic end."

CHAPTER IX.

MODERN SUPERSTITIONS.

THE grosser superstitions of Scotland are gone. The belief in witchcraft lingered till about the middle of the last century, and it was not quite extinguished in Highland and remote districts even at the beginning of the present. In his "Memoirs of his Life and Times," from 1741 to 1814, the Rev. Dr Somerville remarks that it was prevalent in his earlier days. "At that time persons suspected of Satanic influence," he writes, "were still exposed occasionally to popular outrage. *Scoring*, (the operation of drawing blood from a witch above the eyebrows,) then held as an infallible antidote against the baneful effects of their incantations, was actually performed on a poor woman in the parish of Ancrum so late as the year 1775 or 1776." "I have a perfect recollection," he adds, "of several instances; and from aged persons I have heard many more of summary vengeance inflicted on the unhappy victims of popular superstition without any interference or subsequent punishment on the part of the magistrate."

Dr Robert Trotter of Dunvegan supplies me with the following narrative of a witch trial at Skye, not hitherto published. General M'Leod was chief of the clan. A woman accused of witchcraft was arraigned before him; she was condemned to be burned. Bound with cords she was laid on her back and the faggots

beneath lighted with a torch. The general was present. "Oh, general," exclaimed the victim, "is this my reward for saving your life at Fontenoy? Do you mind a crow flying in front of your regiment?" "Yes, Flora, I mind it well," said the general. "I was that crow," said the witch, "and kept back the balls which would have taken your life." "Good," said the general; "was the crow really you, Flora? Loose the cords and set her free instantly. The castle shall be her home, and she and hers shall never want so long as I or mine are lairds of Dunvegan."

From a military officer at Bath, a native of Ross-shire, I have received the following:—The Rev. Donald Mackenzie, minister of Fodderty, (who died in 1809,) though one of the most intelligent ministers in Ross-shire, and a prominent member of the General Assembly, to which he was annually returned, shared in some of the Highland superstitions of the period. He performed his annual journey to Edinburgh on foot, leaving his manse on Saturday, so as to reach the capital on Wednesday evening, that next morning he might take his place in the Assembly. One Saturday, as he set out, a hare chanced to cross his path. "Ah, ye limmer,* is that you?" he exclaimed. "I won't travel to-day." It was deemed in the district an unlucky omen to have one's path crossed by a hare at the outset of a journey.

Kirsty Hill, a fierce old woman at Moffat, who died only a few years ago, professed witchcraft, and was a terror to the neighbourhood. Her imprecations were fearful. She was in the habit of placing pins in a figure intended to represent any of her neighbours against whom she had taken offence, believing that thereby she inflicted upon them bodily injury.

* Slut.

Spectres have not altogether left the scene, but those apparitions which do appear are generally detected, and found to possess flesh and bones. The hamlet of Largo, in Fifeshire, was a few years ago thrown into a state of alarm by a report that a ghost had been seen in the vicinity, and had actually entered a cottage in the place. In truth of the rumour, some agricultural labourers bore testimony, that in proceeding to their work at early dawn, they had observed a figure, robed in white, moving rapidly through the fields in the direction of the village. Its appearance was afterwards explained. A small sheep-dealer in the place had on the previous evening been disposing of a portion of his flock to a flesher in the adjoining hamlet. The bargain was concluded at the flesher's house, and the business was wound up by copious libations of whisky. The sheep-dealer became unfit for proceeding homeward, and, as the best remedy to the bad effects of drinking, the flesher put him into his own bed. The flesher slept upon the floor, but rose early, and betook himself to sharpening his knives in preparation for his morning work. While he was so engaged, the stupified sheep-dealer chanced to open his eyes, and it suddenly entered into his frenzied brain that he was about to be assassinated in order to the plunder of the money paid him for his sheep. Observing a window immediately behind the bed, he darted through it, and in his night-dress sought his way homeward through the fields. And such was the apparition!

A clergyman in Forfarshire was desirous of consulting the pulpit Bible, which had been left in the church. It was late of a Saturday night, and the minister's "man" alleged that he was afraid to venture through the churchyard alone. The minister was lame, but

consented to accompany his "man," provided he bore him upon his back. John undertook the burden; and, with the pastor on his shoulders, and the pulpit Bible under his arm, he was proceeding homeward through the churchyard. Suddenly from beneath a tombstone he was saluted by the query, in an undertone, "Is he fat?" He did not pause for reflection, but casting off his master, exclaimed, "Tak' him as he is!" and forthwith betook himself to flight. But his strength failed him, and the minister reached the manse first. The adventure was explained next morning. Two sheep-stealers had been prosecuting their unlawful occupation; one of them had kept watch at the tombstone, while the other was selecting the best sheep in the fold.

There are still "haunted chambers" in the older mansions, and many ancient castles and "roofless biggins" are associated with legends of superstition. The castle of Kilbride, Perthshire, reared in 1460, and still possessing some habitable apartments, was formerly attended by an apparition. The following is the tradition:—A daughter of the Baron of Cromlix, who resided within a few miles of Kilbride Castle, having listened to the expressions of love of Sir Malise Graham, "the Black Knight of Kilbryde," permitted him to decoy her to a sequestered spot of his darkly-wooded glen, where the ruthless knight to base seduction added the crime of murder. He buried his unhappy victim in the place where he had perpetrated the bloody act, and retired to his castle, but not unattended. The "ghost" of the murdered lady walked by his side, and haunted his dwelling, not only during his own lifetime, but continued after his death occasionally to be seen, in a white robe stained with blood, gliding in the glen, or close by the castle, beckoning

to all who chanced to notice it, to follow it in its progress. Years rolled on; but none was found adventurous enough to obey the ghostly summons, all escaping on the spectre's appearance. At length a chieftain of the family undertook, if it should cross his path, to answer its demands. His courage was soon put to trial. One dark evening the spectre appeared to him as he stood alone at the entrance of his garden, and not without scruples he descended to the glen beneath, where at length the spectre halted, and pointed to the ground with eager significance. Next day the knight directed the ground to be opened, and discovered the remains of the long-deceased Lady Anne, whose sudden departure had hitherto been a mystery. He now caused the remains to receive Christian burial, and the spectre never reappeared.

From a friend in Collace parish, Perthshire, I have obtained the following:—"In the rebellion of 1715, a lady dressed in white, the wife of an English officer, returning homewards, asked and obtained lodging in this parish for herself and palfrey for the night. She was never seen again, and the animal she rode was found next morning, riderless, grazing on Durdle Moor, six miles off. She was known to be wealthy, and her entertainers, it was believed, murdered her to possess her money. They left the place, and all of them died painful or violent deaths. The ghost of the murdered lady is said to have haunted their dwelling till about the year 1800. Many of the last generation profess to have been witnesses of the spectral appearance."—The parochial schoolmaster of Corstorphine, Mid-Lothian, writes me:—"The old castle of the Earls Forrester, with the dove-cot and a sycamore-tree beside it, are associated with curious traditions. A lady arrayed in white, and carrying a

bloody sword, was formerly believed to wander round the tree and dove-cot. The superstitious belief had its foundation in a melancholy story which is set forth in *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, No. 348, 1838; also in 'Fountainhall's Decisions,' and in 'Kirkton's Church History,' page 182."

A correspondent in the parish of Glenisla, Forfarshire, writes:—"Glenisla has its share of the great and wonderful in its traditions. *Collie Cam* is the great hero. His residence was a cave in Mount Blair, which is shown to this day. The young people are afraid of the name of this fabulous giant. He threw a stone of immense size from the top of Mount Blair to a distance of many miles. The stone is pointed out at West Mill near the public road. There is a story told about this stone. The servant-man of a late minister in Glenisla was always in the habit of asking what was the next work he had to do. This annoyed his master very much, and one day when he had asked the usual question, the minister told him to go to Mr Ferguson of West Mill, and ask him for the loan of the 'Glade stane.' Mr Ferguson treated the man to bread and cheese, and then showed him the stone. The man at once saw that he had been 'done,' and hastened to the manse to give the minister a good thrashing for sending him on such an errand.

"Kirkhillocks was wont to be the favourite retreat of the fairies, but the plough has turned over the green sward, and they no longer resort to their former place of meeting."

A correspondent at Dunvegan, Isle of Skye, mentions a curious stone figure at Dunvegan Castle, said to be an effigy of the Fairy Queen, a representation of which was formerly included in the family escutcheon.

Consequent on the legends of superstition, there are

certain days appropriated annually to the observance of peculiar rites. Formerly the first day of May, termed "Beltane," was the most remarkable of these yearly celebrations. In the "Statistical Account" of his parish, published in 1794, the Rev. Dr James Robertson of Callander, records that at that period "Beltane" was thus observed :—"All the boys in a township or hamlet meet in the moors. They cut a table in the sod of a circular form, by casting a trench in the ground of such circumference as to contain the whole company. They kindle a fire, and dress a repast of eggs and milk of the consistence of a custard. They knead a cake of oatmeal, which is toasted at the embers against a stone. After the custard is eaten up, they divide the cake into as many portions of similar size as there are persons in the company. One of the portions is discoloured with charcoal. The whole are then put into a bonnet, and every one, blindfold, draws out a portion. Whoever draws the black portion is compelled to leap three times through the flames, with which the ceremonies close."

In a communication with which I have been favoured from Dr Hugh Barclay, the ingenious Sheriff-substitute of Perthshire, the practice just described is referred to in the following terms :—"In villages to which there is a common pasturage attached, the public herd is a person of great importance. He receives a small sum from each owner of a cow. In early morning and dewy eve he perambulates the *clachan*,* sounding some not over sonorous notes from a horn which once ornamented the head of some patriarch of the herd. The kine, obedient to the call, each winds its path to the highway, and takes its place in the bovine rank with a regularity which would do

* Village or hamlet.

honour to some of our modern volunteers. The same retrograde process is observed in the evening. The humble governor takes bed and board each alternate day with his patrons in succession, leaving his horn the previous night at the door of the next domicile on his roll-sheet, that the inmates may be prepared to receive their guest. On the first day of May the master of the dairy levies from each of his customers a hen's egg. Previous to the day big with fate, his acquaintance is eagerly sought by the rising generation, that they may be favoured with an invitation to the approaching feast. On the appointed day, the invited party assemble, and accompany their leader and his flock to some high eminence. A hole is dug, and a fire lighted in the aperture; then lots are cast, and the youth on whom it falls as the victim, leaps seven times over the fire, but suffers nothing more grievous. A pot is then placed on the embers. The juvenile circle dance and sing around it, until the broken eggs are poached and roasted with lumps of bread, when all sit down to eat, and again rise up to play."

On the first of May, in the lowlands, even in the capital, the young of both sexes ascend some neighbouring hill at sunrise, to bathe their countenances in the early dew. These practices have evidently descended from a period prior to the introduction of Christianity, and would clearly point to the worship of the sun, the *Baal* alike of Orientals and of Britons. The form of making the *devoted* youth leap through the flames is obviously derived from the Druidic practice of offering human sacrifices to the god of fire; "the passing through the fire to Moloch," described in the sacred volume. "The prefix of *Bal* or *Bel* to many places in country districts," writes Dr Barclay,

"bears unmistakable proof of their connexion with the pagan god under his many names and prerogatives."

The Rev. Paton Gloag, minister of Blantyre, informs me of a curious Jacobite game, which seems peculiar to the children of that parish. They arrange themselves into two parties, one King George's men, and the other King James's men. The game is carried on in verse.

I extract the following from an article in a recent number of the *Quarterly Review*, on the subject of Scottish Character. Referring to Mr Kennedy's "Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire," the reviewer proceeds:—"Mr Kennedy informs us that during a visitation of the more remote Highland parishes in 1656, the Presbytery of Dingwall found that, 'amongst their abominable and heathenish practices, the people of Applecross were accustomed to sacrifice bulls at a certaine time, upon the 25th of August, which day is dedicate, as they conceive, to St Mowrie, as they call him.' Whether this Mowrie was a heathen deity, a Popish saint, or one of Columbus's missionaries, it may be impossible to determine. The name most probably represents a surviving tradition of some Druidical deity. This idea receives some support from the fact that, by the same people, 'there were frequent approaches to some ruinous chapels, and circulating of them.' The Presbytery also found 'that future events in reference specially to life and death, in taking of journeys, was expected to be manifested by a hole of a round stone, wherein they tried the entering of their head, which, if they could do, to wit, be able to put in their heads, they expect their returning to that place; and, failing, they conceived it ominous.'"

"In Gairloch, during the same tour of visitation by the Presbytery, similar practices were found to pre-

vail, as appears from the following minute, dated 'Kenlochewe, 9th Sept. 1656:'—'The Brethren, taking into their consideration the abominations within the parochin of Garloch, in sacrificing of beests upon the 25th August, as also in pouring of milk upon hills as oblations, whose names are not particularlie signified as yet, referred to the diligence of the minister to make search of thoas personnes, and summoned them; and withal, that by his private diligence he have searchers and tryers in evrie corner of the countrey, especially about the Loch Mowrie, of the most faithfulle and honest men he can find; and that such as are his elders be particularlie poseit concerning former practices, in what they know of thoas poore ones who are called Mowrie, his deviles, who receives the sacrifices and offerings on account of Mowrie, his poore ones, and that, at least, some of thoas be summoned to compeare before the Presbyterie until the rest be discovered.' . . . . . In 1678, the curate of Gairloch summoned certain parties 'for sacrificing, in ane heathenish manner, in the island of St Ruffus, commonly called Eilean Mowrie, in Lochewe, for recovering the health of Cirstane Kackenzie.'"

The island already mentioned, situated in Loch Maree, otherwise called Loch Ewe, contains a well, which Dr Mitchell, Deputy Commissioner in Lunacy, describes (in a paper communicated to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 1861) as sacred to Saint Malrhuba, a missionary from Ireland, who founded a monastery at Applecross towards the end of the seventh century, and was held in reverence all over the neighbouring district. This is the answer of Dr Reeves, the very learned Irish antiquary, to the question, who was Mowrie? And it is adopted by Dr Mitchell, who states that "insane patients used to be, and have

within a few years from this time been, bathed in the well, and then carried out in a boat round the island, being occasionally plunged in the waters of the loch; after which, and after leaving an offering of their clothes on a tree, a cure was expected. And we understand that people still frequent the isle, take water from the well to drink, or wash with for the recovery of health, and leave trifling offerings—bits of cloth," &c.

In the seventeenth century, the first Sabbath of May and the first day of June were deemed especially suitable for visiting certain springs or "wells" dedicated to saints, and supposed to be possessed of healing virtues. Those who sought the benefits of these healing waters deposited on the margin of the wells certain oblations indicating their gratitude. The offerings were generally of the simplest kind, consisting of bits of thread, portions of rag, and fragments of useless apparel. A woman in Stirling, who had, on the first Sabbath of May 1647, taken a pint of water from "Christ's Well" for the benefit of a sick female relative, and left a portion of the invalid's "heid muche"* on a tree near the well, was subjected to the discipline of the kirk-session.

"On the first Sunday of May," writes Mr Stephen, parochial schoolmaster of Glass, Banffshire, "old women—and young women and children, by their advice—wash their sores, when they have any, in Wallack Well, and leave pins, buttons, rags, and even small coins in the well, supposing that its waters contain great power to remove all cutaneous diseases. These practices are now fast dying away." "There is a well," writes a correspondent at Huntly, "designated after St Mungo, and it is a popular belief that its waters possess extraordinary healing virtues, and

* Woman's cap.

on that account many resort to it on the first of May to drink its health-giving waters. The country people take home bottles of it to prevent disease among their cattle, and as a charm against the fairies, who are supposed to have a peculiar rendezvous at a croft called Elfin in this parish."

One of the latest springs resorted to in Scotland for the supposed miraculous power of healing, was that of St Fillan, in Perthshire. It is referred to by Sir Walter Scott, as he apostrophises the Harp of the North in the opening lines of the "Lady of the Lake:"

> "Harp of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
> On the witch-elm that shades St Fillan's spring."

Till a recent period, persons afflicted with insanity were brought for cure to the well of St Fillan. They were first precipitated into the well from the rock above it, and afterwards carried to an old ruinous chapel in the vicinity, where they were left bound for the night. When any one in the morning was found to have broken loose, he was supposed to have been loosed by Saint Fillan, and was pronounced cured.

On the eve of All Saints' Day, or Hallowe'en, being the 31st of October, many superstitious practices continued to be observed. These are celebrated in a poem by Burns. Pulling the plant of *kail** is the first ceremony. The individual who desires to ascertain as to his or her future partner, proceeds to the garden or kail-yard, with the eyes closed, and in this condition pulls a stock of cabbage. The stock being large or little, straight or crooked, determines the size and shape of the future spouse. If earth adhere to the root, that is tocher or portion; the taste of the stem indicates the disposition or temper of the husband or

* Cabbage.

wife. The stems are then placed on the top of the door, and the Christian names of parties proceeding afterwards into the house, fix in succession the Christian names of the future helpmates.

"Burning the nuts," writes Burns, "is a famous charm. They name the lad and lass to each particular nut as they lay them in the fire, and according as they burn quietly together, or start from beside one another, the course and issue of the courtship will be." There is a third charm, which I present in the words of the same bard:—"Steal out all alone to the kiln, and darkling* throw into the pit a clue of blue yarn; wind it in a clue off the old one, and towards the latter end something will hold the thread. Demand, 'Wha hauds?'† An answer will be returned from the kiln-pit, by naming the Christian and surname of your future spouse." There are some minor charms enacted on All Hallow Eve. An apple is eaten before a mirror, when, by the light of a candle, the face of the future conjugal companion will be seen in the glass looking over the shoulder. A handful of hempseed is sown, and the future spouse forthwith appears. The same interesting associate is supposed to be invoked when, all alone in a dark barn or outhouse, an individual throws up "a sieve or riddle, full of *nothing*." Similar appearances follow on the riding round the stackyard upon a broomstick.

In some Highland districts, Hallowe'en is celebrated by bonfires. When the bonfire has been consumed, the ashes are collected into a circular heap. A stone is then put in near the circumference for every person of the several families interested in the bonfire; and whatever stone is moved out of its place or injured before morning, the person represented by it is said

* In the dark. † Who holds?

to be *fey*—that is, he is regarded as doomed to die within the year.

Some of the modern usages of Christmas or *Yule Day* were connected with superstition. At the close of last century, on Yule eve, every "gudewife" baked her "*Yule* bread;" and if a bannock happened to fall asunder, it was regarded as an omen that she would not see another *Yule*. On Yule morning, all classes breakfasted on fat-brose, a dainty which formerly as much pertained to that day as does now the Christmas goose.

On the morning of *New Year's Day* it was deemed unlucky to enter a neighbour's house without a gift, and to ask a light from a neighbour was considered tantamount to taking his life.

The Rev. Mr Goodsir, who was minister of the parish of Monikie about the beginning of last century, was very zealous in putting down the custom of observing feast days, a practice deemed, in those days of strict Presbyterianism, to be highly Erastian. The observance of *Yule* he particularly objected to, and on that day made it a rule always to be visiting through the parish, and, by his presence, checking those symptoms of festivity which his pulpit thunders had failed to eradicate. On one occasion he was observed by the gudewife approaching a cottage, and, in her hurry to remove all signs of feasting from the minister's sight, she lifted the "kail-pot" off the fire and put it into a box-bed in the kitchen, where, sure enough, Mr Goodsir had no thought of looking. On his retiring, the gudewife triumphantly repaired to the bed, and, lifting her pot, found, to her dismay, that the three feet had burned as many holes through the whole of the bed-clothes. The direction of the wind on the night of *New Year's Day* was believed to indicate the state of the weather during the remainder of the season.

On Old Candlemas (the 13th of February) children were wont to carry home-made candles to the school. A general illumination was produced, and the remainder of the candles was presented to the schoolmaster. The following *saw*, or prophetic rhyme, is connected with the day:—

> "If Candlemas Day be wet and foul,
> The half o' winter's gane at Yule;
> If Candlemas Day be fair and clear,
> The half o' winter's to gang an' mair."

Fastern's E'en (Shrovetide) was appropriated to the cruel and degrading practice of cockfighting. On *Pasch*, or Peace Sunday, young persons found amusement in discolouring eggs; and on Palm Sunday they made garlands of willows in honour of the day. The three last days of March, or *the borrowing days*, were supposed to indicate the state of the weather for the season. If they were tempestuous, the season would be favourable; if fine, a bad season was to be anticipated. There were days to which superstitious rites were attached in particular districts. In the parish of Sandwick, in Orkney, the population used to kill their pigs on the 17th of December, which was known among them by the designation of *Sow day!* In some districts of Perthshire, the day of the week on which the 14th of May happened, was regarded as unlucky during the remainder of the year; and no serious business was consequently begun on it.

The Rev. John Stark, of Gargunnock, Stirlingshire, communicates:—"The only peculiar custom in this parish, so far as I know, is that of beating a drum when the weather is dry, and blowing a horn when it is wet. This is done every morning in summer at five o'clock, and in winter at six, the object being to arouse the inhabitants of the village to go forth to their daily

toil. The same thing is done in the evening, at nine o'clock, during the whole year, to intimate to them that it is time to retire to rest."

The practice of forbearing to marry in May seems to be of considerable antiquity, and has of course a superstitious origin. It may have arisen from an apprehension of the evil influences of the fairies, as May, in the old French and other languages, signifies *green*, the favourite colour of those supernaturals. Persons are still to be found who hold the colour of green in aversion and dread. James Grahame, the author of "The Sabbath," could not divest himself of being influenced by the superstition that the colour was fatal to the name of Grahame, and he would not so much as allow a green cover to be placed upon his table.

A superstitious observance of the course of the sun obtains in northern and Highland districts. In proceeding to sea, the Orkney seaman would regard himself as being in imminent peril if the vessel was incidentally turned in opposition to the sun's course. In going to bathe, the Highlander approaches the water by making a circuit from east to west on the south side; and in this manner does he uniformly conduct his dead to burial. So is the bride conducted, in presence of the minister, to the side of her future husband; and at the social meeting the glass is in this manner handed round.

There are superstitions likewise associated with the moon. The increase, and full growth, and wane of that satellite are the emblems of a rising, flourishing, and declining fortune. No business of importance is begun during the moon's wane; if even an animal is killed at that period, the flesh is supposed to be unwholesome. A couple to think of marrying at that time would be regarded as recklessly careless respect-

ing their future happiness. Old people in some parts of Argyllshire were wont to invoke the Divine blessing on the moon after the monthly change. The Gaelic word for fortune is borrowed from that which denotes the full moon; and a marriage or birth occurring at that period is believed to augur prosperity.

The ancient doctrine of "the evil eye" led to superstitious belief in cures by means of incantation. A sprig of mountain-ash was deemed the best charm or instrument of incantation against witchcraft. It was affixed by red thread to the doors of cow-houses, was worn by herds on the pastures inside their clothes, was made to fasten the halyards of fishing-boats, and was attached to the garments of the timorous. Hence the old rhyme—

> "Rowan-tree and red thread
> Mak' the witches tyne * their speed."

A medical man in Lochawe, in the course of last century, turned this superstition to account, by disposing of mountain-ash sprigs to the inhabitants of his district, accompanied by certain prescriptions as to their use. He left a fortune, and his grandson became a landed proprietor.

So long as the Highlander attributed every species of sickness and ailment, whether on man or beast, to the influence of "the evil eye," the conjuror or spell-man took the place of the physician. This personage was to be found in every district of the Highlands, and his trade was, like that of the surgeon of Lochawe, a lucrative one. He undertook by incantation to heal all bodily ailments, without even seeing the patients. He foretold the termination of an illness without knowing the complaint; and if an individual had fallen out

* Lose.

with his sweetheart, he wrought a charm to unite them in affection. Diseases in cattle were removed by a peculiar mode of incantation. There are in the possession of some families of note in the Highlands certain transparent stones, known as *the leugan*. These are of circular form, about the size of an egg, and are surrounded with antique hoops of silver. Water into which *the leugan* had been dipped, was supposed, on being sprinkled on the ailing cattle, to effect a cure.

The Rev. John Brydon, minister of Sandsting and Aithsting, in Shetland, in his recent statistical account of the united parishes, supplies the following most interesting particulars respecting the existing superstitious rites of healing still practised in that district. I owe no apology to the reader for the length of the quotation :—

"*Wresting-Thread.*—When a person has received a sprain, it is customary to apply to an individual practised in casting the 'wresting-thread.' This is a thread spun from black wool, on which are cast nine knots, and tied round a sprained leg or arm. During the time the operator is putting the thread round the affected limb, he says, but in such a tone of voice as not to be heard by the bystanders, nor even by the person operated upon—

'The Lord rade,*
And the foal slade;†
He lighted,
And he righted;
Set joint to joint,
Bone to bone,
And sinew to sinew,
Heal, in the Holy Ghost's name.'

"*Ringworm.*—The person afflicted with ringworm takes a little ashes between the forefinger and thumb

* Rode. † Slid.

three successive mornings, and before having taken any food, and holding the ashes to the part affected, says—

'Ringworm, ringworm red!
Never mayst thou either spread or speed,
But aye grow less and less,
And die away among the ase,'*

at the same time throwing the little ashes held between the forefinger and thumb into the fire.

"*Burn.*—To cure a burn, the following words are used :—

'Here come I to cure a burnt sore;
If the dead knew what the living endu
The burnt sore would burn no more.'

The operator, after having repeated the above, blows his breath three times upon the burnt place. The above is recorded to have been communicated to a daughter, who had been burned by the spirit of her deceased mother.

"*Fey-Folk.*—It is a practice with some to burn the straw on which a corpse has lain, and to examine very narrowly the ashes, from a belief that the print of the individual's foot who is next to be carried to the grave will be discovered. The straw is set on fire when the body is lifted, and the funeral company are leaving the house.

"*Elf-Shot.*—A notion is prevalent in the parish that when a cow is suddenly taken ill, she is elf-shot; that is, that a kind of spirits, called 'trows,' different in their nature from fairies, have discharged a stone arrow at her, and wounded her with it. Though no wound can be seen externally, there are different persons, both males and females, who pretend to feel it in the flesh, and to cure it by repeating certain words over the cow. They also fold a sewing-needle in a

* Ashes.

leaf taken from a particular part of a Psalm-book, and secure it in the hair of the cow, which is considered not only as an infallible cure, but which also serves as a charm against future attacks.

"When a cow has calved, it is the practice with some, as soon after as possible, to set a cat on her neck, and draw it by the tail to the hinder part of the cow; and then to set it on the middle of the cow's back, and draw it down the one side, and pull it up the other, tail foremost, that the cow may be preserved, while in a weak state, from being carried away by the 'trows.' This is enclosing the cow, as it were, in a magic circle.

"As the trows are said to have a particular relish for what is good, both in meat and drink, so when a cow or a sheep happens to turn sick or die, it is firmly believed that it has been shot by an elfin-arrow, and that the real animal has been taken away, and something of a 'trowie' breed substituted in its place. And some, who have been admitted into the interior of a trow's dwelling, assert that they have beheld their own cow led in to be slaughtered, while, at the same time, their friends on the surface of the earth saw her fall by an unseen hand, or tumble over a precipice. Sometimes, also, the trows require a nurse for their children; for it would appear that they too have a time to be born and a time to die; and, therefore, females newly confined must needs be watched very narrowly, lest they be carried off to perform the office of wet-nurse to some trowling of gentle blood, who has either lost its mother, or whose station among her own race exempts her from the drudgery of nursing her own offspring.

"There is one place in the parish, called 'Trolhouland,' a name which indicates the superstitious notions with which it is associated: it signifies 'the high land of the trows.' The internal recesses of knolls

are considered the favourite residences of the trows, and they are seldom passed without fear and dread by the inhabitants of the upper world. And when, after nightfall, there may be a necessity for passing that way, a live coal is carried to ward off their attacks. For many centuries the same superstitious belief has prevailed in Norway, that certain places were the favoured haunts of malevolent genii. There is their 'Trolhetta;' and in Iceland, 'Troladyngiar' and 'Trollakyrkia.'

"*Taking Away and Recovering Milk and Butter Profits.*—That a person may take away and procure for herself the summer profits of her neighbour's cows, it is the practice to go clandestinely and pluck a handful of grass from the roof of the byre, and give it to her own cows, thereby supposing that the milk and butter which should have been her neighbour's, will, by this means, become hers. And, in order to regain the profits which are supposed to have been taken away, it is usual to milk in private a cow belonging to the person who is suspected of having taken them, and thereby to get them back."

"I shall add," writes Mr Gibson, "one instance more of superstitious belief, which appears to have taken hold of the mind of the Shetlander at a very early period, and which, like the others above enumerated, still retains its hold, though, perhaps, under some modifications. It is called 'casting the heart.' It has long been believed, that when a person is emaciated with sickness, his heart is worn away, or taken away by some evil genii. A person skilled in 'casting the heart' is sent for, who, with many mystic ceremonies, melts lead, pours it through the bowl of a key or pair of scissors held over a sieve, which is also placed over a basin of cold water. The lead is melted,

and poured again and again, till it assumes something like the appearance of a heart; at least the operator strives to convince the patient and his friends that this is the case. It is worn suspended from the neck, next the skin, that the cure may be completed."

Dr Hugh Barclay supplies me with the following remarkable narrative in connexion with the usages of superstition :—

"In a Highland district," writes Dr Barclay, "a great sensation, some years ago, was occasioned by a rumour that the skull of a dead person was instrumental in the cure of epilepsy, and that graves were opened, and this part of the body removed to act as an amulet. The authorities were called on to examine the matter, and the result was, that so far the rumour had foundation. A skull was used, but which was not obtained from the supposed source, but from a medical student. It was first got by a family, one of whose members was subject to the disease; and after it was thought to have served its purpose there, it was sent round the district to all similarly affected, and who asked its aid. A fire was kindled on the march of two lairds' lands, and so scrupulous were those concerned as to this point, that in one case the gate of a field was lifted off its hinges that the fire might be in the exact line of demarcation. Certain ingredients were put into this unusual caldron, some rhymes were chanted or sung, and the soup thus manufactured was swallowed by the person for whose benefit the ceremony was got up. The hour of the orgies was precisely at midnight. It is not to be wondered at that several of the patients, whose case was more of hysteria than of a deeper complexion, had their symptoms abated, and so, by the lovers of the marvellous, were considered as cured. But it was equally remark-

able, and yet not to be wondered at, that others showed symptoms of a like malady, and became applicants for the potent remedy. It was as if the demon which possessed one body, on being thus exorcised and driven out, sought refuge in another!"

There are many strange "frets" or prejudices of superstition which still linger in more remote and isolated districts. The first couple united in wedlock by a clergyman are supposed to be "unlucky." Bad luck is believed to attend a *black-foot*—that is, the party who introduces those persons to each other who subsequently become man and wife. The night-dress of a newly married pair being stolen, prognosticates unhappiness between the couple; and in some parts of the Highlands a marriage is thought only to promise good luck if, during the performance of the nuptial ceremony, all knots in the apparel of both the parties are carefully loosened.

In the "New Statistical Account," the Rev. Dr James Gibson of Avoch, Ross-shire, presents the following graphic narrative of a matrimonial superstition still potent in that district:—"The fishermen here," writes Dr Gibson, "generally marry at an early age, and seldom select a bride above nineteen years. The marriage is solemnised in the church on a Friday, but never before twelve o'clock. On one occasion, there were three marriages to be solemnised on one day. The friends of the parties, as is usual, waited upon me personally to engage my services. I assured them I should be at their command; and requested them to fix upon a convenient hour for the three parties to be married at once. The friends of the parties looked grave,—shook their heads,—said nothing. I was entirely at a loss to divine what was meant by this sudden gravity of countenance, the shaking of the

head, and the profound silence, and begged them to assign me their reason for this mysterious conduct. After some delay, and hesitation and reluctance upon their part, I was given to understand that if the three parties were to be married at once, serious consequences might ensue, for there would be a struggle made by each party to get first out of the church, believing, as they did, that the party that should get out first would carry the blessing. To prevent such serious consequences as might ensue under such circumstances,—and these consequences might perchance prove far more serious than the mere tearing of gowns, and caps, and coats, (and these their best, of course,) —I offered to marry the parties in succession. But next came the question of precedence, a delicate and difficult point at all times to settle, at least, to settle to every one's satisfaction,—a point which they all acknowledged they were unable to settle; and that is not to be wondered at, for they knew that each party wished to be married first. How, then, were we to get out of this second difficulty, became the question. After a cool and deliberate, and, I can assure the parties, an impartial view of the subject, I thought fit to propose that the party first contracted should be married first. The proposition was at once agreed to unanimously. The friends of the parties to be married went home perfectly satisfied with the arrangement. The three parties were married on the same day, in succession. But let it be remembered that special care was taken that no party should meet any of the other parties, either going to or returning from the church. Why? Because it would be unlucky."

Burt, in his "Letters from the North of Scotland," published in 1754, writes, "when a young couple are married, for the first night the company keep posses-

sion of the dwelling-house or hut, and send the bride-groom and bride to a barn or outhouse, giving them straw, heath, or fern for a bed, with blankets for their covering; and then they make merry, and dance to the piper all the night long."

"Soon after the wedding-day, the new-married woman sets herself about spinning her winding-sheet, and a husband that should sell or pawn it, is esteemed, among all men, one of the most profligate."

"At a young Highlander's first setting up for himself, if he be of any consideration, he goes about among his near relations and friends; and from one he begs a cow, from another a sheep; a third gives him seed to sow his land; and so on, till he has procured for himself a tolerable stock for a beginner. This they call *thigging*."

"On the day of a fisherman's marriage," writes a correspondent at Avoch, Ross-shire, "a silver coin is put into the heel of his stocking, and after being conducted by the 'best man' to the church door, the shoetie of his right foot is unfixed, and a cross is drawn on the door-post in order to set at defiance the power of witchcraft."

"At marriages," reports the Rev. Robert Story, in the Statistical Account of the parish of Roseneath, "numerous crowds assembled, and generally they were very boisterous festivities. On the intermediate days before the *kirking*, the young pair, with their attendants, preceded by the bagpipe, perambulated the parish, visiting the cottages that had furnished their quota to the carnival. The ceremonies were closed by the whole party, after Divine service on Sabbath, adjourning for refreshment to the contiguous tavern."

Connected with births and baptisms, some curious superstitions still linger in the upland and less fre-

quented districts. After the birth of a child, the neighbours who come to call for the mother, before touching the young stranger, purify themselves by taking a burning torch from the fire and crossing themselves with it, and thereafter throwing it into the fire, and spitting after it. No good fortune is believed to attend the infant, unless the neighbour wives receive on their first visit the good cheer of *butter saps*, or scones baked with butter.

The rite of baptism is in certain cases associated with superstition. On this subject I am again privileged to quote from the communications of the learned Sheriff-substitute of Perthshire:—"In certain districts in the east of Scotland," writes Dr Barclay, "it is considered improper and unpropitious, when several children are simultaneously presented for baptism, for the female sex to take precedence over the rougher section of humanity. The just penalty for such rash interference with the rights of men is that the unoffending girl is doomed to have a beard. Not many years ago, in a town in the east of Scotland, where a clergyman from the west was for the day officiating, that important organ of parish order, the beadle, or *betherel*, had not properly arranged the sexual series of a large number of candidates for baptism. The sponsors had to ascend a stair to the pulpit side, each in his turn. At length the one who stood next in rank and file showed no token of movement. The clergyman in vain beckoned him to ascend, and at length, in stern language, addressed the recusant parent: 'If, sir, you desire to have your child baptized, you *must* come up hither.' To his surprise, and not less to that of the congregation, an answer was returned in still sterner voice: 'An' do you think I will alloo my lassie to hae a beard?' The proper func-

tionary stept forward and rectified the order of march; he set up the boy who had been misplaced, and then the protesting father presented his girl, now satisfied that the dire penalty of the violated law would not fall upon her fair face."

The superstitious practices of the *Lykwake** were formerly a source of grievance and recklessness. The *Lykwake* consisted in the custom of remaining beside the body of a deceased person from the period of death till that of burial, in the supposed dread of some supernatural interference with it, if left alone. "After the death of any one, not in the lowest circumstances," writes Burt, in his "Letters from the North of Scotland," "the friends and acquaintances of the deceased assemble to keep the near relations company the first night; and they dance, as if it were at a wedding, till the next morning, though all the time the corpse lies before them in the same room. If the deceased be a woman, the widower leads up the first dance; if a man, the widow. But this Highland custom I knew, to my disturbance, within less than a quarter of a mile of Edinburgh, before I had been among the mountains. It was upon the death of a smith, next door to my lodgings, who was a Highlander."

"The upper class hire women to moan and lament at the funeral of their nearest relations. These women cover their heads with a small piece of cloth, mostly green, and every now and then break out into a hideous howl and Ho-bo-bo-bo-boo, as I have often heard it done in some parts of Ireland."

Describing the practices of the insular Highlanders, this writer adds, "They have an odd notion relating to dead bodies that are to be transported over rivers, lakes, or arms of the sea. Before it is put on board

* Latewake.

they appraise and ascertain the value of the boat or vessel, believing, if that be neglected, some accident will happen to endanger the lives of those who are embarked in it; but, upon recollection, I think some of our seamen entertain this idle fancy in some measure. For I have heard they do not care for a voyage with a corpse on board, as though it would be the occasion of tempestuous weather."

A correspondent at Iona writes:—"A practice prevails here, when a neighbour dies, those residing near, and, at times, those at a distance, sit beside the dead body by turns, day and night, till the interment takes place, at which the nearest female relatives and neighbours generally attend."

"Latewakes," writes another correspondent in Collace parish, Perthshire, "obtained here till thirty years ago. From the death to the graves-mouth, and after it, was a period of maudlin rejoicing. The climax of the proceedings was the day of interment, when the friends and acquaintances of the deceased assembled at an early hour. If the house was not large enough, a barn sufficiently spacious was opened, into which the arrivals, as they came, sat down, when hard drinking till the hour of lifting went on. I have heard the late parochial clergyman, Mr Rogers, say that he has seen persons falling like sheep into the grave over the coffin, and, had they not been lifted, they would have remained there. Mr Rogers drew up a statement for signature, by which every male parishioner bound himself not to exceed two glasses of whisky at funerals, a proceeding which fortunately put an end to these brutish exposures."

The parochial schoolmaster at Glenisla tells me:—"At funerals, in the old times, the people used to sit four or five hours eating and drinking to such an

extent that on their way to the churchyard, with the corpse on the 'spokes,' very few of them were able to maintain their equilibrium. By a rule lately introduced, they sit only about one hour, and it is now proposed to restrict that time to twenty minutes. Previously, they often had to bury their dead by candlelight, and on more than one occasion the coffin was lost for a time."

"Not long ago, and quite within the recollection of the middle-aged," writes a friend of mine at Logie Coldstone, Aberdeenshire, "it was an invariable custom to make funerals festive occasions, which generally ended in intemperance and brawls. Party or private feuds often broke out on these occasions; and many stories are told of the funeral processions being stopped, and the coffin laid on the ground till the quarrel was determined."

A correspondent resident in the parish of Kerrick, Kirkcudbrightshire, writes me as follows:—"Prior to the year 1812, the burials in the parish were conducted at a great expense, and under considerable irregularity. Services of spirits, occasionally interspersed with wine, according to the circumstances of the deceased, were, with various kinds of bread, handed about, till the place where the guests assembled presented a scene of rejoicing, rather than a house of mourning. Politics, statistics, all sorts of subjects, were discussed at the full pitch of the voice. About the year 1812, the kirk-session took the matter of burials into their consideration, and drew up rules to be observed in the conducting of funerals, and submitted them to the heads of families for their approval and signatures. Two of these rules stipulated that there should be only one service, and that the corpse should be removed, at the latest, ten minutes after the

appointed hour of meeting. To render the latter rule practical, a hearse was purchased out of funds in the possession of the kirk-session. All the heads of families adhibited their names to the rules submitted for their approbation, with the exception of one, who could not comprehend a funeral with only one service. The rules formed by the kirk-session are still strictly adhered to, and funerals proceed with becoming decorum."

From the parish of Latheron, in Caithness, the following narrative of funeral practices has been communicated to me:—"When any one dies, it is generally the practice that some of the friends and neighbours convene in the place where the body is lying, and hold meetings for reading, praise, and prayer, frequently night and day, until the funeral takes place. When the body is laid in the grave, the people accompanying the funeral, particularly those who may be nearest the grave, take off their hats, as if pronouncing some benediction, though none is formally pronounced."

"The habit of drinking at funerals is not carried to such excess as it was a few years ago. Formerly the people got three drams before starting, though all did not take so many, and one at the churchyard; now it is confined to one glass before starting, and none at the churchyard, unless on a rare occasion, when they come a great distance."

"At one time there was no notice given to attend a funeral; any one that chose might go. In this way there would be a great number at some funerals, and at others hardly enough to carry the body to the grave. About sixty years ago, or thereby, a better system was adopted. The parish minister intimated from the pulpit that none should go to a funeral but those who got notice, and that those who did get notice were mo-

rally bound to go. Since then, funerals have been conducted in a far more orderly manner."

"Another habit was that the body was always laid with the feet to the south. This is not now so much attended to as it was at one time."

"The practice of lifting the hat or uncovering when the coffin is just deposited in the grave is," writes a friend at Pitsligo, Aberdeenshire, "duly observed, and is likely an old ceremony which had been observed in Popish times for recommending the soul of the deceased. The chairs overturned at the lifting are allowed to remain, and are in no case touched, even by children at play, till the company return from the funeral. It is said that a violation of the above usage betokens an early death in the same family."

From Barra, Inverness-shire, a correspondent informs me:—"Women attend funerals, and on the way to the place of interment the procession is frequently accompanied by a piper, who wails a melancholy dirge."

A correspondent residing in Sleat parish, in the same county, writes:—"From two to six women generally follow the funerals of the peasantry to the grave."

A correspondent in Aberdeenshire mentions a practice which is observed at funerals in that county: "The supporters, generally a pair of chairs on which the coffin is placed till the spokes and mortcloth are adjusted, are thrown down after the removal of the bier; and the grave-digger in every instance tolls the church-bell immediately before breaking the ground—that is, before commencing to dig the grave. Formerly the sexton was wont to accompany the funeral from the residence of the deceased to the place of interment. This practice is now superseded by the church-bell being rung immediately before the interment, a

practice which is common in different parts of Scotland."

A correspondent at Huntly, Aberdeenshire, refers to a practice still existing in that parish of "placing a Bible, a burning candle, and a plate of salt, on the breast of a corpse during the time it lies for interment."

From Watten, Caithness-shire, I have the following:—"It was customary in former times to display a flag and use a hand-bell at funerals."

The parochial schoolmaster of the united parishes of Leochel and Cushnie, Aberdeenshire, refers to the belfry of an old church being rebuilt at a modern period by families interring in the surrounding ground in order that the practice of ringing the bell on such occasions might be continued.

A correspondent in the parish of Spott, East Lothian, informs me that the parishioners bury their unbaptized children "at ten o'clock in the evening, and immediately under the dropping of the church roof."

From Westray, in Orkney, I have the following:—"At the commencement of the seventeenth century coffins were not used here, but the dead were borne to the graveyard on the bier, the body being enshrouded in the death-clothes only, and so deposited in the grave."

"At funerals," writes the Rev. Mr Story of Roseneath, "four rounds of whisky were considered due to wounded affection, and departed worth, and respect was shown to the dead by the intoxication of the living. . . . . On one occasion, the funeral procession halted half-way to the place of interment, in order that the bearers might be relieved. At this juncture a dispute arose on the question who should carry the head and who the feet. Each claimant for the post of honour had his bereaved and inebriated supporters; the coffin was laid down, and physical force instead of

moral suasion was quickly resorted to for the settlement of the discussion; and there was much din and dust of battle ere the quarrel was adjusted." When Mr Story had at length succeeded in checking these unseemly scenes, an old Highlandman, made an effort to revive the abolished custom, after it had been for some time in abeyance. "You know that has been given up, Duncan," said Mr Story, as Duncan was preparing to hand round the replenished glasses. "Surely," replied Duncan, "ye wadna' hinder me payin' respec' to the dead?" Mr Story said he did not think the proposed measure would manifest that laudable sentiment; he would return thanks for what they had got, and those who were inclined to drink might stay behind. All followed him from the house.

Dreams furnished a wide field for superstition. Interpreters of dreams were formerly denizens of every Highland village. Belief in the *wraith** of a dying person appearing to the friends to warn them of his approaching dissolution is greatly on the wane; and so are the supposed indications of the *death-drop*. But the cock crowing at an unusual hour is still regarded as *uncouthy*, or alarming. Salt spilt on the table is an evil omen; a candle melting, again freezing, and curling over like a ribbon, is regarded as a sign that the person who is opposite to it in a company shall die first.

There were singular freaks of superstition in connexion with some of the feathered tribes. The feathers of a wildfowl in a pillow under the head of a dying person were supposed to prolong the patient's life. It is an adage, that "Nae gude comes o' shootin' black craws."

In an article on "Scottish Character" in the *Quarterly Review* for July 1861, the writer remarks:—"A

* Ghost.

friend informs us that within the last six years, having occasion to go into a cottage where a poor woman was lying bedridden, he was told that a catechist had advised, a few days before, 'that a cock should be buried in the floor of the cottage, to obtain relief for her.' Dr Mitchell says, 'that in an epileptic case, on the spot where the patient fell from his first attack, a live cock was buried with a lock of his hair and parings of his nails, as an offering to the unseen power.' And Mr Theodore Martin, in a note to his translation of 'Catullus,' just published, remarks that 'the cock is, in some of the border counties, and also in the Western Highlands, sacrificed by the peasantry as a last resource when an invalid is despaired of. A hole is dug in the floor at the foot of the bed, the cock's throat cut, and the blood allowed to run into the hole, which is then carefully covered up. There seems to be no doubt that this is the old sacrifice to Æsculapius, transmitted to this present day from the Romans of the Empire.'"

In reference to the superstitious influence of birds of a different description, I make the following extract from a sketch of George fourth Earl of Aberdeen, in the *Times* newspaper of the 15th December 1860: —"The Aberdeen family were connected with the Gordons of Gight, from whom Lord Byron sprang. Soon after the birth of George Gordon, the future Earl of Aberdeen, and before that other George Gordon, Lord Byron, was born, all the lands of Gight, which were the marriage portion of Lady Byron, were sold to liquidate the debts of her spendthrift husband. Not long before the sale, it was observed that all the doves and the herons forsook the lands of Gight, and came in a body to Lord Haddo's. 'Let the birds come,' said Lord Haddo, 'and do them no harm, for the lands will soon follow.'" The sudden appearance of magpies is held to be ominous. The adage runs,

"One's joy, two's grief, three's a marriage, four's death." A freak of prejudice is cherished by schoolboys against one of the most beautiful and harmless of "the songsters of the grove." The yellow-hammer is persecuted and plundered of its eggs or young on account of the following rhyme:—

"Half a puddock,* half a toad,
Half a yellow-yeldrin,†
Gets a drap of the devil's blood
Ilka May mornin'."

A hobgoblin horse was associated with northern and midland waters. It was termed the *water-kelpie*, and is poetically described by Home as "the angry spirit of the waters." *Water-kelpie* assumed the aspect of a small black horse, and occasionally appeared on the banks of lakes and streams for purposes of mischief. Allowing strangers to mount, the malicious creature dived with them to the depths, raising an unearthly laugh. A place near Loch Vennachar bears the name of *Coill-a-chroin*—that is, the wood of lamentation—owing to the popular tradition that the water-kelpie, in the form of a Highland pony, having here induced a number of children to get upon its back, galloped off with them to the lake, where it cast them into the water. "A sea horse," writes our correspondent at Dunvegan, "inhabited the Loch of Dunvegan, and could at pleasure transform itself into a man; it was killed by a blacksmith with a red-hot iron, and was buried near Dunasfell Tower, where its grave is still pointed out."

A mischievous hobgoblin, similar to or identical with the *water-kelpie*, is thus described by the Rev. Mr Brydon of Sandsting, in his account of Shetland superstitions:—"There is a 'trow' (a kind of spirit) called a Neogle, somewhat akin to the *water-kelpie* of other

* Frog. † Yellowhammer.

lands, who makes his appearance about mills, particularly when grinding, in the shape of a beautiful pony. That he may attract the attention of the person who acts the part of miller, he seizes and holds fast the wheel of the mill; and, as is natural, the miller goes out to examine into the cause of the stoppage, when, to his astonishment, a beautiful pony, saddled and bridled, is standing, and ready to be mounted. Who but an old miller could let slip such a fair opportunity for a ride? But if he should neglect warnings, and unguardedly put his foot in the stirrup, his fate is sealed. Neither bit nor bridle avail him anything. Off goes the pony, bog or bank arrest not his course, till in the deep sea he throws his rider, and himself evanishes in a flash of flame. But some millers are proof against the temptation, having been taught caution by the fate of others; and, instead of taking a ride, salute his Neogleship with a fiery brand through the lightning-tree hole, which makes him immediately scamper away." From the supposed diabolical practices of this hobgoblin, may have arisen the saying concerning a doubtful person, "He is not to ride the water on."

The lakes of the south of Scotland were associated with a *water-cow*. She was possessed of peculiar propensities, yet scarcely so malevolent as *water-kelpie*. The following anecdote of the water-cow of St Mary's Loch is related by the Ettrick Shepherd:—"A farmer at Bowerhope once got a breed of her, which he kept for many years till they multiplied exceedingly; and he never had any cattle throve so well, until once, on some outrage or disrespect on the farmer's part towards them, the old dam came out of the lake one pleasant March evening, and gave such a roar that all the surrounding hills shook again, upon which her progeny, nineteen in number, followed her all quietly into the loch, and were never more seen."

The water-kelpie and the water-cow have all but disappeared, or are only remembered in stories of the nursery. *Ignis fatuus*, variously termed *Spunky* and *Will-o'-the-wisp*, formerly the terror of the benighted traveller, has yielded to scientific investigation. This strangely mysterious haunter of the country churchyard and the solitary moor has proved to be phosphoric hydrogen, or the gas which arises from putrefying animal and vegetable substances, and which is so extremely volatile that the current produced by a person in approaching it, however cautiously, is sufficient to dissipate it or drive it forward.

One peculiarity of the old national superstitions remains only to be noticed. It is the propensity which seems to have actuated our progenitors of associating the more remarkable features of nature with the common designation of the enemy of mankind. At the romantic scenery on the Devon, there are "the Devil's Mill" and "the Devil's Punchbowl." The Eildon Hills, in Roxburghshire, are associated with a Satanic legend. The presence of detached blocks of rock on the southern slope of Benarty Hill, in Kinross-shire, is accounted for by the following tradition:—The Prince of Darkness had been desirous of marching from Kirkcaldy (his peculiar abode, according to the old song) to the Carse of Gowrie, and had taken a lapful of stones with him to be placed as stepping-stones across the Tay, when an accidental stumble in stepping over Benarty Hill caused him to drop the whole on the devoted territory beneath.

The devil was moving across the country with a load of earth upon his back. He stumbled in Lanarkshire; looking round, he exclaimed, "Have I tint ocht?"* hence Tintock Hill. In crossing the valley of the Irvine the burden slipped down his back, and he called out, "It's low down," hence Loudon Hill, Ayrshire.

Proceeding through the ocean he let a quantity of earth fall, on which he said, "What ails ye?"—Ailsa Crag. Getting into deeper waters he made a complete stumble, and as the entire burden fell down into the ocean, he lustily exclaimed, "It's a' wrang," hence the Isle of Arran.

In the parish of Baldernock, Stirlingshire, there is a natural curiosity termed the "Auld Wife's Lift." It consists of three large stones, each of many tons weight, situated on Craymaddie or Blochearn Moor. Two of the stones are near each other; the third rests on the top of these, and is covered on the upper surface with initials. The tradition is that the "Woman of Strathblane," the "witch of Campsie," and "the auld wife of Baldernock," differed as to which of them was the strongest. So the Woman of Strathblane laid down one of the stones, then the Witch of Campsie the second stone, and the auld wife of Baldernock put on the top of them the largest stone of all, and was thereafter declared the victor.

Scottish superstition is rapidly on the wane; and it is almost certain that the increase of intelligence consequent upon the improved means of locomotion, the vastly-extended circulation of newspapers, the system of cheap literature, and the establishment of Mechanics' Institutions in every hamlet, will speedily dissipate every remnant of popular delusions.

* "Tint ocht," lost anything.

THE END.

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BALLANTYNE, ROBERTS, AND COMPANY, PRINTERS, EDINBURGH.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 June, 2018